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Thus to win a burst of applause.



# THE HEROES OF THE PUPPET STAGE

BY

MADGE ANDERSON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY THE AUTHOR



NEW YORK  
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Of wonderful exploits I sing, and of matters enormously trifling,  
Of a people gigantic as dolls, whose heads are as empty as theirs are,  
For the god who created this race in his image was blameless. He  
stole not

A spark from the heavenly fire to endow them with minds and  
with worries.

Of cross-roads that echo with rollicking laughter I sing, and  
an actor

Who crowds them with boisterous throngs to gape in delight at  
his jesting.

Gathered from far and from near, they pay the price of admittance,  
Nor grudge an exorbitant charge, to gaze at this Thespian's prowess.

Look! The small curtain is drawn and a soft light shines  
through the opening.

See now the shimmering wires as the creaking inhabitants enter  
The stage, while their canvas homes shake, and the balconies,  
daubed on in colour.

Amid such diminutive scenes, in a world so little and narrow,  
Whatever mankind has done, in assemblies, or battles, or triumphs,  
These little folks too have done in their theatre tiny.

Translated from Addison's *Machinæ Gesticulantes*.





# I

## The Prologue





## The Prologue

No one can ever forget his first experience at a puppet play. Mine was at a fair. As I walked about among the booths, I saw a sign in green and gold letters,

A PUPPET PLAY TO-NIGHT  
SEVEN DIFFERENT SCENES  
and  
100 PUPPET ACTORS  
in the  
Great Spectacular Drama  
of  
SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON  
In Which Appears  
The Famous Puppet Hero,  
SAINT GEORGE,  
The Master of all Marionettes,  
and the  
Beautiful Egyptian Princess,  
SABRA,  
With Hundreds of Christian Knights, Pagan Warriors,  
Moorish Dancers, and the Most Wonderful  
Three-headed Dragon Known in Christendom, Breathing  
Fire, Flame and Smoke.  
Admission ONLY  
TEN CENTS.

Whatever the price had been, I could not have resisted that invitation. I felt that I must see the play. So I

waited for the first performance to end and the audience to descend the stairs that led to the gallery where the play was given.

"You may as well go up now," the ticket seller said. "They won't come down. Every one stays to see the play a second time." He knew that no one who comes under the spell of the puppets ever leaves them except under compulsion. But puppets meant nothing to me. They were only lifeless dolls pulled by strings, doing another's bidding without question or intelligence; yet after I had entered the little theatre I was lost, tangled in the strings of the puppets, and ever since then I have followed them wherever they pulled. And where have they not led me? Into many a wild-goose chase indeed; into all sorts of experiments with doll-actors and toy theatres and miniature stage effects; into the dustiest books that ever lay untouched on the shelves of public libraries, through the pages of philosophers, historians, playwrights and novelists. I have trailed the puppets through Europe and across to Africa, and eastward to India, Java, China and Japan; I have stalked them through the primitive forests of North America. Back through the ages I have tracked the puppets, for to know the history of these tiny actors is to know the whole story of the drama, and that is the history of all the peoples in the world. From the beginning of time the puppets have been treading the boards; wherever and whenever the living drama has existed, there have been the little wooden players too.

All that I have heard and seen and read of puppets I have written down, and all that is really important is printed in

this book. If, as you read it and meet the famous puppets I have met and see them in the plays in which they lived, you add your laughter to that of the simple people, young and old, who have laughed at the puppets' antics since the world began, the author will be satisfied.





## II

At the Puppet Show

“Here come I, Saint George, in my shining armour bright;  
I am a famous champion; I am a worthy knight.  
What man that’s mortal dares to stand  
Before me with my sword in hand!  
No fight will Saint George ever shirk  
With Pagan Knight or wicked Turk.”

From *The Mummers’ Play*.



## At the Puppet Show

THE curtain dropped and the puppet play was ended. When the lights went on, I found myself in a long, narrow gallery. At the end of the room was hung a curtain and here, set high so that it could be seen easily over the heads of those in front, was what seemed at first to be a picture-frame, almost as wide as a man could reach with arms outspread, and as tall as a child. Inside the frame was a curtain, still quivering from its rapid descent. It was really a window shade, and it was decorated with a green, scaly dragon breathing fire and purple smoke. The golden flames twined about a shining plumed helmet and an ornate sword. These were the arms of Saint George, my neighbours explained, and when they learned that I had not seen the play, they began to tell me about it and to boast of its attractions.

"You should see Saint George. He has armour and a real sword."

"It is made of tin," said another, "and so are the dragon's scales. I saw him make them."

The last speaker commanded respect, for he was honoured with the acquaintance of the man who owned the puppets and he had seen what was behind the magic curtain. I wanted to hear more from him; but my questions were drowned by the clamour of the younger children, who ever since the curtain fell had been clapping loudly and now

were shouting, "Do it again! Do it again!" until the manager of the show obligingly consented to repeat the play.

"That is one advantage of a puppet show," said a woman who sat near me. "Can you imagine a company of human actors, when they had just finished a play, being willing to go all through the performance again?"

A bell tinkled as a signal for the curtain, and after some hesitation and one or two promising starts that ended in defeat, the window-shade rolled smoothly upward. The small stage was so dark that at first nothing could be seen but a tiny fire. Then as the flames leaped up, they revealed a little figure about as tall as a new lead pencil, who was bending over the fire and swaying rhythmically back and forth as he stirred the contents of a toy cauldron. Now in the brighter light we could see slender threads that stretched upward from the doll actor and twitched in time to his jerky motions, some swinging with the point of his high hat, as he swayed to and fro, others circling with his arm as he moved the spoon round and round the kettle. But the guiding strings were forgotten when a deep husky voice, that sounded as if it came from the room behind the stage and yet seemed to be the little actor's, spoke the strangest words I ever heard.

Straining my eyes to read the characters in the order of their appearance on the programme I saw that this was the wizard, Ormandine. The tiny actor ceased muttering his incantations and shrieked "Kalyb!" with such violence that we started from our seats. The stage grew suddenly dark, then light again, and there stood a wicked-looking witch.

When Ormandine questioned her about the strange things that he said he had seen in the smoking kettle, she admitted in a high squeaky voice that Saint George had escaped from the castle where she had kept him imprisoned ever since she had stolen him from his cradle; and this was not all, for, said she, Saint George had also freed from her power the six other champions of Christendom, heroes all of them and every one an enemy to all wizards, dragons and witches. Ormandine shook his fist and stamped his foot in anger when he heard this news, but Kalyb merely vanished from the stage without taking a step. If we had not seen the twitching strings, we should have thought she were really flying.

When I first looked at this little play, it seemed as if I were seeing it through the wrong end of a pair of opera glasses, but soon my eyes grew so used to the diminutive size of the actors that they appeared as large as real people, and when the curtain dropped and I looked about me, the children in the audience seemed like giants, so life-like had the tiny actors been.

The curtain rose again for the first act. There had been no noise of shifting scenery, yet there was a complete new stage-set in miniature. To the left a dark cavern yawned beneath the heavy branches of a luxuriant tree, whose green boughs bore clusters of white blossoms and abundant golden fruit. It was, so my neighbour said, a magic orange tree and gave strength to all who touched it; and this was Egypt; we knew it by the pyramids rising in the distance beneath the blue Egyptian sky.

Soon a puppet actor appeared, carrying a lantern, his hand

lifted to his ear, as if he heard some one. It was the faithful Khufu, the old servant to King Ptolemy. At the sound of hoofs, the servant, waving his lantern over his head with the stiff movement that puppets use, called in quavering tones:

“Halt! Come no farther, whoever you may be.  
There is no entertainment here, or revelry—  
Sorrow and death alone are waiting thee.”

And a voice answered clear and strong from the other side of the stage:

“Sorrow and death I do not seek;  
Yet will not flee them, if the weak  
And helpless need my strength—for I have sworn  
To aid all those; for such tasks was I born.”

To which the servant answered:

“Wert thou the bravest knight in all the world I’d say,  
‘Begone!’  
Halt! There is but one man can aid here. Art thou  
that one?”

The knight came in with a magnificent swagger, such as only loose-jointed puppets can achieve. It was Saint George himself; he carried his gleaming sword Ascalon in one hand and with the other led his noble horse Bucephalus. He shouted in ringing tones:



“To be the bravest knight of all I do not claim,  
Here am I, Saint George of England is my name.”

But we knew who he was, even before he spoke, for he wore his blue and gold garter, and a red cross blazed on his breast. He looked very noble, as he stood, with his bright armour gleaming, in the radiance of the lantern light.

“Tell me, what land is this and who thou art  
And what the sorrow is that tears thy heart.”

The old man seemed too overcome with grief to answer. His head drooped in a very life-like manner.

By this time the actors appeared to have lost the stiffness which was so noticeable at the beginning of the play, and it seemed quite natural for them to emphasize their talk with the sweeping gestures they used. The way that Saint George brandished his gleaming sword was magnificent. We felt that he would be equal to any deed that was asked of him. He was very confident too.

“Tell me what wrong it is I must make right,  
Is there an ogre here that I must fight,  
Or some magician’s spell to be undone?  
I’ve fought and conquered many such a one.”

Khufu explained,

“This land of grief and sorrow where you are,  
It is the land of Egypt known afar.

Years, nine and twenty, in this land of blight  
A loathly dragon dwelt in yonder cave."

He raised his arm and pointed to the deep mouth of the cavern. Saint George regarded it solemnly, while Khufu continued,

"Harmless enough he sleeps in there at night,  
But when the day comes he begins to rave  
And bellow for a victim to devour;  
Raging and murderous he wrecks and he lays waste  
The whole fair country-side, and maims or kills  
All who must be abroad at that dread hour.  
Naught will prevent this havoc but the taste  
Of human blood, and for these many years  
A maiden has been sacrificed each day  
To appease his wrath. Now all are gone  
Of Egypt's damsels, excepting only one,  
Sabra, the daughter of King Ptolemy,  
Here waits her fate!" He wept. "Her subjects  
are in tears."

The grief-stricken servant threw the light of his lantern upon the lovely Princess Sabra. She was dressed in a beautiful gown of white satin with a golden girdle, and on her head, a golden crown. But alas, she was tied to a tree! As Saint George knelt in reverence before this radiant beauty, the Princess bent toward him and told him in a tinkling, silvery voice, that what the old man had said was true, and begged Saint George to hasten from "this dragon-beset cavern" and leave her to her fate. But Saint George

was brave; what man ever dared he dared; and raising his hand imperiously, he directed the old servant,

“Get you to the King and say to him, ‘This day  
A champion has been found who swears to slay  
The dragon and cut off his filthy head,  
And then to court, and beauteous Sabra wed.’”

So Khufu turned and tottered off the stage with his happy message.

“Lovely Princess,” said Saint George, “are you willing to marry me if I kill the dragon? For I would not hold you to your father’s promise against your own will.” Saint George addressed the Princess in prose, quite different from the bombastic verses in which he had talked with the old servant. But evidently rhymes and rhythm were not needed to make his words seem beautiful to her, for the Princess said she would be delighted to marry him and gave him a ruby ring to wear on a chain around his neck. It was a magic ring, she told him, and if ever danger or grief threatened its owner, the red ruby would turn as green as an emerald. She charged him to remember, if he found his strength failing, that any one who lay under the enchanted orange tree would straightway receive superhuman vigour, and that no evil creature dared venture beneath its branches.

While the lovers were exchanging their vows, the dragon began to roar, and smoky fumes poured from the black mouth of the cave. Saint George advanced to meet the unseen foe.

The emerging dragon was a terrifying sight. He glided as if he had a million joints and he gleamed with hundreds



who, upon his appearance, had fainted

of blue and green and silver scales. The threads that caused his magnificent coils and glides seemed part of him and they made him look all the more terrifying as they alternately

straightened and dropped in shimmering loops. The dragon had three heads; each one of them was of a different hue, and from each one a different coloured smoke belched forth.

"Where is my breakfast?" cried the blue head, greedily stretching its long neck in the direction of the Princess, who upon his appearance had fainted from fright and was hanging limp from the waist where the cords bound her to the tree.

"I shall have the young knight for my breakfast," shouted the green head. "I shall have his wishbone and heart," screamed the violet head. "No, you can't have them," contradicted the blue head, "I want them!" And the dragon's three heads fell to quarrelling among themselves about who should eat the choicest bits of poor Saint George.

Meanwhile the object of their disagreement was stepping from side to side with upraised shield and sword lifted ready for action, watching his chance to cut off one of the writhing heads.

"Now look here, can't you be reasonable?" said the violet head and attracted the attention of the others, who were caught off their guard for a minute, a minute which Saint George seized to drive his sword straight through the neck that supported the blue head and thus to win a burst of applause from the audience.

"Serves you right for being so greedy," gloated the violet head. The words were scarcely out of its mouth before Saint George lifted his sword and chopped off the second head. Here I missed a part of the fight because the whole



front row rose and cheered the hero. The green head evidently had no mind to share the fate of his two companions. He was whirling about and he suddenly dealt Saint George such a blow with his neck that the brave knight was felled to earth. But before the clumsy dragon could recover his balance, the champion had rolled under the orange tree. There he was safe from the attacks of the dragon, who, not daring to approach the sacred tree, ramped about the stage, bellowing with baffled rage. Saint George jumped up, crying,

“My strength is now renewed by this good tree;  
Dragon, come on, if thou darest fight with me!”

The dragon rushed at the brave warrior, striking at him with his huge paw, but missing him every time. Then Saint George hit him such a blow on the chest that the beast fell backwards and rolled over and over across the stage.

“Mercy, Saint George!” cried the dragon, kneeling down, his forepaws clasped pitifully.

“Mercy?” cried Saint George. “What have you done to deserve mercy? Have you ever had mercy on the land of Egypt?”

The cowardly dragon begged for his life. “I know I have done very wrong, eating all those beautiful maidens,” said the now single-headed dragon, “but I never wanted to! I always advised against it. The other two heads would do it,” he explained.

The other heads offered no defence of their conduct; they merely rolled over and over until Saint George kicked

them into the cave. Once he missed his aim as he kicked at one of the heads, but it bounced along just the same, and its strings wriggled up and down until it disappeared from sight.

"Oh, spare my life, Saint George, and I will forever more lead a good one!" implored the trembling dragon.

"You deserve no mercy," cried the hero, "and no mercy shall you have!" He was just about to chop off the dragon's only surviving head, when the Princess recovered from her fainting spell and prettily added her entreaties to those of the monster. At the lady's request, Saint George spared the beast's life, and, letting his sword drop, asked the monster, "What demon possessed you to make you kill and devour so many good people?"

"It is a terrible demon," said the dragon humbly. "His name is Hunger. If they had only given me some other food, I wouldn't have eaten them. I need," he said artlessly, "not less than ninety pounds of meat each day to keep in health."

Then said Saint George, "Upon your solemn oath that you will never again taste human blood, your life shall be spared. But you shall have only thirty pounds of meat a day, for now that you have only one head, you will not need to eat more than a third of what your system demanded when you had three."

The dragon rose slowly, one joint at a time. He thanked Saint George for sparing his life and promised to do whatever his conqueror should demand. Meanwhile the victorious knight was employing his famous sword to cut the heavy ropes that held the Princess Sabra bound to the tree.

"Take off your girdle, fair Princess," he said, "and put it over the dragon's neck. He is your captive, and so am I.

"Now to your royal father's presence let's away,  
And celebrate our nuptials on this day."

So they set out together, Saint George and his Princess, leading the reformed dragon by the golden girdle. The dragon's exit was not as dignified as it might have been. He seemed to be trying to amuse the audience with acrobatic feats. He leaped and flew and coiled and looped the loop until his strings became so hopelessly entangled that he had to be hustled off the stage in a most ignominious manner.

"The dragon made a great mistake," said one of the audience, "to quarrel with himself like that. If he hadn't been angry he would have fought better, I suppose."

"No, he was a coward," his neighbour moralized, "and a coward is always a quitter."

Between the first and second acts the curtain rose on a darkened stage and again the wizard Ormandine was seen stirring the magic potion in the cauldron. Then there appeared a Moorish knight, named Almidoor, who related how three times he had tried and failed to murder Saint George. "First," he said, "I sought to kill him by sending armed retainers to waylay the Christian knight in a dark ravine on the road from the dragon's cave to the palace. But Saint George would not be killed and, fighting one against twelve, he slew three of his assailants and at-

tacked the others so furiously that they were forced to flee for their lives."

If Ormandine was angry when he heard from Kalyb that Saint George had escaped, how much more violently did he shriek and curse now and upbraid the Turk for not trying at least once more to kill the Christian hero.

"Then," Almidoor calmly continued his story, "I commanded a servant to mix a poisoned drink and to give the fatal goblet to Saint George when the court drank in celebration of the dragon's defeat. But when the menial entered the banquet hall, Sabra was warned by a magic ring and that vile slave, Khufu, tripped my servant and spilled the deadly potion."

We were glad to hear that the ring had given warning of the wicked plot; but the magician was furiously angry at the report of failure. He displayed his wrath by stirring his spoon violently round and round and flinging his robes and his strings right and left. Almidoor told the wizard that he had led the King of Egypt to think that Saint George was plotting to succeed him. He had persuaded King Ptolemy to send his new son-in-law to the King of Persia with a sealed letter which requested that the bearer be killed. As soon as Saint George departed, Almidoor had carried off Sabra to his castle. The audience gasped at the perfidy of this calm villain; but all was still well with the world, for his plans had gone astray. The Christian knight had been cast to the lions, but he had slain the beasts, escaped at night, stolen Sabra from Almidoor's tower and carried her off to safety in Greece.

While the wicked Moor was exposing his villainy, we felt quite sure that Saint George would rescue the Princess, and we were not sorry that there were still more adventures for the puppet Saint George.

Of all the combats I have ever seen there was none so ferocious as the fight between the Christians and the pagans in the second act of this play. All the knights gleamed in splendid armour; but the Christians had crosses on their surcoats while the pagans wore the Mohammedan crescent on their turbans and mysterious Arabian devices on their shields. We could not help remarking the superiority of puppet actors over merely human players. No battle of live actors could show such carnage. How the heathens' heads were sliced off by the flashing swords of the Christian puppets and rolled across the battle-field! How the amputated arms and legs flew about the stage! How the knights leaped into the air and whirled round and round; how they staggered, stumbled, regained their balance and lurched at their foes! How tin swords clashed on swords and on the shining breastplates of the Christian knights! The seven champions of Christendom all appeared in the fray. Handsome puppets they were too! What doughty deeds they did, each knight disposing of his full quota of Turks! There Saint Andrew slew his thousands and Saint Patrick his ten thousands, while Saint Denis of France and Saint David of Wales gave noble account of themselves. But of course none among these heroes was so valiant or so energetic as Saint George.

He was so life-like that we could almost see him clench his fist when a swarthy messenger delivered Almidoor's in-



solent challenge, boastfully prophesying the death of Saint George and the recapture of Sabra. We felt comfortably safe about the Princess. We knew that she had been dispatched to England under escort of the faithful Khufu and with the reformed dragon as a body-guard. And we felt safe about Saint George too, when we regarded the confident way in which he answered the hateful messenger, "For those words you too shall perish, as well as thy perfidious master, Almidoor!"

The battle was almost over when we saw this treacherous Moorish servant again. He stole up behind the hero and would have slain him. The warning cry of the puppet Saint David was drowned by the shouts, "Look out, Saint George!" from the boys in the audience. The little girls turned away their heads and covered their eyes. They could not bear to see their beloved hero killed. Nor did they look at the stage again until the cries of "Atta boy, Saint George, hit him again!" assured them that the valiant Christian knight was saved from death. Meanwhile the hero had dispatched the treacherous slave by neatly slicing off his head, and was now confronting the terrible Almidoor, who brandished an immense curved sword and uttered strange grunts, speaking perhaps in Arabian.

"Prepare to die," he growled in English. "And so be it with all Christians." They were his last words, for the knightly arm of Saint George drove his tin sword straight down through Almidoor's turban and clove the wicked Turk from head to heels. One half of him rolled in the dust, the other dangled helplessly on its guiding string. How Saint George swaggered and crowed, "So perish all

heathen!" The audience expressed their admiration of this brave deed with loud huzzas.

But the victor's triumph was short-lived. Joy changed to anxiety in a moment. The faithful Khufu arrived panting, having run, it was evident, all the way from England without stopping to take breath. Sabra was in danger! In response to Saint George's eager questioning, the messenger told of the Princess' troubles. She had been unwillingly courted by a wicked Englishman, Lord Siward; but just before this villain was about to force her into a marriage against her will, he had been killed by the loyal Khufu. Then Sir Egremont, Baron of Chester—

"Mine old enemy," cried Saint George. "I have foiled him in many an attempt to rob the widows and orphans and to oppress the poor!"

Sir Egremont, the messenger said, was a cousin of Lord Siward and he was determined to avenge his kinsman's death and incidentally revenge himself on Saint George. He would not admit that Khufu had killed his wicked relative with justification; but insisted that Sabra herself had murdered him because he hated Saint George. Within a month the unhappy Princess was sentenced to be burned at the stake in Coventry Market-place, unless a champion could be found who would defend her by overthrowing her accusers in a joust, as the English law required. Several of Saint George's friends, pitying the distress of the beautiful Sabra, had undertaken to defend her, but all had been overcome by Sir Egremont.

There was no time to waste. The hero must hasten to England to rescue Sabra. The story must be true, for as the

messenger told his tale, the whole stage gradually glowed in a greenish light and the stone in Saint George's ring had changed from a ruby to an emerald.

Now had this been a moving-picture instead of a puppet play, we might have seen the swift journey of Saint George on his good horse Bucephalus, as he skimmed the road along the north coast of the blue *Ægean*, through Thrace, across to Epirus and so to the north of Italy. We might have watched him ride from Marseilles north by west, following the old roadway through Lyons and Paris, until he came to Calais and found the boat waiting to take him across the Channel to the white cliffs of England. We might have seen his wild ride from Dover, stopping now and then at some inn for fresh horses and a snatch of food and rest, through Rochester, London, Southwark, the gates of towns flying open as he raced past Oxford, Banbury and Warwick, until he arrived at Coventry. But since it was a puppet play, we could only imagine the breathless race against time as we waited for the curtain to rise on the third act.

Here was Sabra bound again, with fagots piled around her and a wicked looking executioner holding a torch all ready to light the fire at Lord Egremont's command. At the hour of noon the month would expire and no champion for Sabra had been found to prove her innocence. The clock-bell was striking now, slowly, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, but just before the stroke of twelve, entered Saint George, in time. The lather on Bucephalus' sides and the foam about his mouth told us how weary the horse must be; yet his tireless

rider immediately challenged Sir Egremont to a duel. Needless to say how it ended; the false knight was killed and Sabra freed.

In the midst of the rejoicing, in which you may be sure the audience participated, a countryman entered breathless and, kneeling before the victorious knight, implored him to save his family and neighbours from the very dragon whose life Saint George had spared. It seemed that the dragon had forgotten all his promises to lead a life of rectitude, or perhaps he had not received his daily ration of thirty pounds of meat. Whatever his reasons were, he had returned to his former evil ways. He sallied forth daily from his cave on Dunsmore Heath and ravaged all the country round and he would not be appeased with any diet but human flesh. There was one more battle for Saint George to fight.

"Saint George should have killed the dragon in the first place," whispered one of my young neighbours.

Dunsmore Heath was a dreary place. The stage was almost empty and the sky was painted flat and grey. The dragon advanced across the bare floor roaring and belching fire. He had grown since last we saw him, and, although he had not the three heads of the first act, he was much more terrifying to behold. Saint George was unimpressed by the dragon's increased size. He scolded the faithless beast roundly for not keeping his promise.

The dragon did not seem to mind the lecture at all. He only roared louder and stamped his feet and waved his floundering, scaly tail. We were surprised that the dragon did not whimper and plead, or run away from Saint George's

man, whose worth he had felt before, or at least apologize for his conduct. We were unprepared for the desperate resistance he offered.

Now followed a duel between the keen sword Ascalon and the sharp claws of the dragon. But the clumsy, lunging creature, powerful as he was, could be no match for the clever strategy of Saint George, who backed him into a corner and would have put him to death in a second, if in one of the dazzling flashes of lightning that added terror to the dragon's deafening roars the wizard Ormoundine had not appeared. The magician waved his wand and presto, the dragon vanished and in its place was a hawk, that flew up and hovered above Saint George's head, just out of Ascalon's reach. The hero however was undaunted. He jumped into the air with a sudden jerk of his guiding strings and dealt so fierce a blow at the bird that his enchanted adversary would surely have been killed, had not another flash of dark and light and another wave of the wizard's wand transformed the hawk into a serpent gliding across the stage. After it raced Saint George, his bright sword raised high. He was just about to chop off the reptile's head, but again the gods withdrew the light and the wizard waved his conjuring wand and the hero found himself confronting a griffin, who lumbered about the stage, striking at him with his huge paw.

From one fabulous shape to another the dragon changed, and one monster after another appeared and disappeared. Bats and birds flew about the stage beating with their wings at the valiant knight; unicorns and centaurs, chimeras and hippogryphs assailed him from front and side and rear.



Serpents crawled across the stage and tried to trip the hero's feet. But at every one of them, the intrepid Saint George struck with his sword, until finally the wizard vanished with a shriek and the dragon returned to his original shape, still fighting, not only with his claws, but swinging at Saint George with his long tongue and movable lower jaw, as if he were going to bite off his head, and beating at him with his wings.

It was under the dragon's left wing, raised to strike, that Saint George ran his sword straight to the hilt. The great beast ceased to coil and rear. His wings flopped helplessly and he lay motionless on the floor; even his guiding strings dropped beside him.

We felt very sorry for the dragon. We realized that he deserved his fate, but we had become quite fond of him, as one does of any pet animal that one grows used to. We were glad to know that his head could be fastened on again and the other two also, and that he, being a puppet, would come to life and ramp again in the next performance of the play.

### III

## Behind the Scenes

## The Puppets Take a Curtain Call

“Ladies and gentlemen  
And children too,  
Who of course  
Are little ladies and gentlemen.  
And for that matter  
So are we,  
And we are what  
All children ought to be,  
Seen but not heard.  
The voice you suppose to be ours  
Is really our master’s voice;  
Our sighs, our tears, our prayers,  
Our heroic bearing,  
We owe to him who pulls the strings;  
And the noble thoughts we express so eloquently  
Are all his too.  
We ourselves are thoughtless,  
Block-heads in fact,  
We are literally descended  
From a family tree,  
And if our gestures  
Are a bit wooden,  
That is the reason.  
Yet why should we  
Apologize to you  
Human beings  
For being puppets,  
When, as the great Showman of the Globe once said,  
You too are only players.

If all the world's a stage,  
Then all the men and women in it  
Are but puppets;  
They must take the cues the playwright gives;  
They cannot plan  
Their exits  
Or their entrances;  
Nor can they choose  
The part they play;  
And even how they play it must depend  
Upon the way their joints are made  
And how the chisel slid along their limbs;  
For as the artist swung his brush  
Across each face,  
So must the actor smile or frown.  
In joy or woe,  
Hero or clown,  
Each one must go  
Into the lighted space  
And take his lot,  
Laughter, applause or jeers,  
Not what his acting's won,  
But according to the plot,  
Until the curtain falls  
And the play's done."

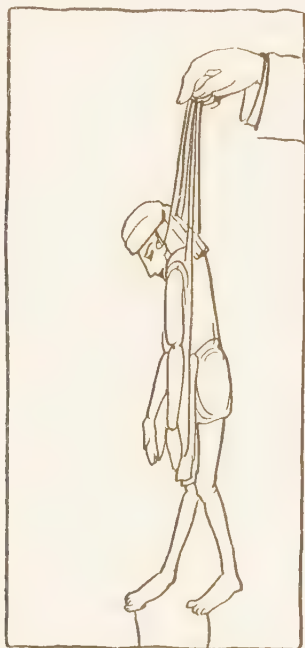
## Behind the Scenes

BEHIND the scenes the actors hung by their strings, looking very dejected and unheroic indeed. It was difficult to believe they were the same characters that so lately I had seen moving animatedly through the adventures of Saint George. They gave nothing but blank stares in return for the admiration of the eager crowd that pushed through the curtain to the puppets' greenroom; they did not blink an eye-lash when curious grown people felt their joints, nor even when their younger patrons poked inquiring fingers into their eyes.

The showman guarded his puppets against these well-meaning attacks as well as he could; but when he heard from some of the people in the audience that I was so unduly interested in the mechanism of his play as to attract their attention, he generously invited me to remain and see the mysteries of the puppet greenroom. As I stood hesitating, wanting, yet not quite daring, to touch the wonderful jointed doll actors, the puppet player, who evidently had no awe of them, lifted one of the actors up by the strings as if it were a kitten and handed it to me with its head and all its members hanging limp. I held it out at arm's length—it was the faithful Khufu—and eagerly jerked one of the strings which were attached to his joints, whereupon without any warning, Khufu, never changing his placid stare, smote me most unexpectedly beneath the nose. The



next time I pulled a string I was more careful in my experiment, but I was just as much surprised at the result. Khufu began to walk towards me with a lunging step, suspended in the air as he was. Unconsciously I retreated and then,



The Showman lifted up  
one of the actors as if  
it were a Kitten.

realizing that it was my own action that caused the attack, I let go of the string and Khufu's heavy weighted shoe dropped with a clang as it struck its neighbour.

When I appealed to the showman for direction, he showed me how the puppets' movements were managed by wooden

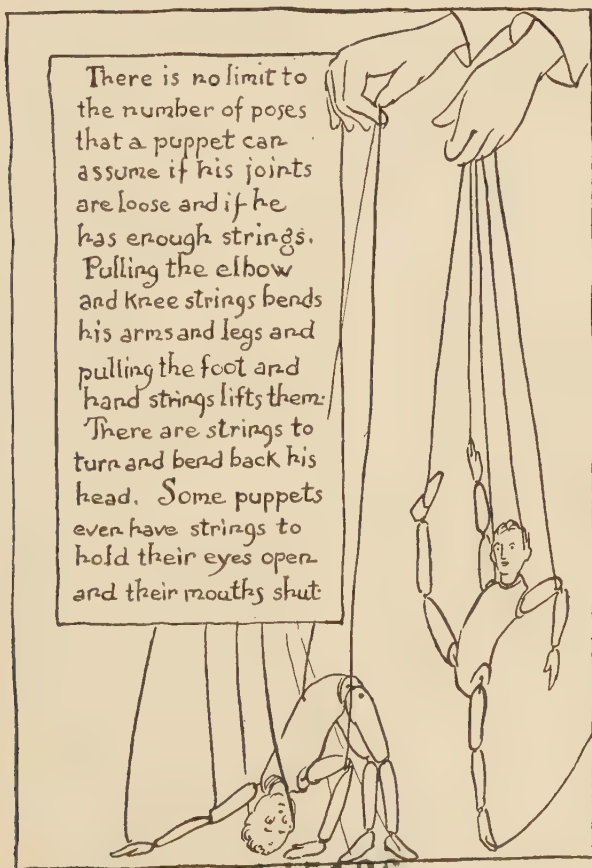
pins to which the strings were attached. Khufu had only five strings, one for each leg, one for each arm, and one to keep him standing up; but Saint George's valorous deeds were the results of dozens of strings; he was jointed so he could kneel and bow and make heroic gestures and shift his shield and wield his sword.

The Princess Sabra had only a few strings, but like many another woman, she made up for lack of intelligent action by the beauty of her costume; and she did not need many strings, for her graceful walk was a glide and she was only expected to throw both arms over the shoulders of Saint George, to hand him the ring, and to droop fainting from the waist where the cords bound her to the tree. But she could close her eyes to make her swoon more convincing, and open them at the jerk of a string. On account of this accomplishment, the showman told me, the Princess had been cast in many rôles. She played the part of the Sleeping Beauty in the fairy tale and of Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat, who floated sadly down to Camelot, lying white and still with both eyes closed.

It seems that a puppet is jointed and strung only for such motions as are necessary to its part in the play. If every actor on the stage were completely equipped with joints and strings and able to make any possible movement, there would be grave danger of so many strings becoming tangled, so it is better to provide each doll with only the strings it needs to use.

But there is no limit to the poses that puppets can assume. The showman went to his box and brought out an unusually large good-natured looking doll giant and showed

me how he could be made to grow tall or short just by loosening a peg that held the folds in his waist together.



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The showman also presented me to a fearsome looking devil, who sometimes appeared in an encore and carried off the bodies of Almidoor, Sir Egremont, and the dragon on his pitchfork, much to the terror and delight of the audi-

ence. This character had not appeared to-day for fear of offending a little girl who had shed tears over the dragon's death, but in the old English puppet play of Saint George and the Dragon, he entered every time any one was killed and dragged the victim off to hell by the heels or the hair. But the devil would not take the dragon; he wouldn't have him at any price. So as the poor dragon had no place to go, for there was no possibility of his getting into heaven, the Doctor had to be called to bring him back to life.

One great advantage of puppet actors is that when they are once made up for a part they never need another inspection and they are always dressed and ready in time for the play. Then too, it is not necessary to search everywhere for a person of the right type for a particular character. All one has to do is to carve and paint a puppet to fit the part. The doll-actors never change their expressions.

But if the puppets' faces do not show their feelings, they do show their characters. Their beauty is always in direct proportion to their moral rectitude. The hero is handsome and always serene of countenance, the heroine ever fresh-coloured and freshly painted. The villain wears, upon the conventional dark visage with its twirled moustache, a perpetual rascally expression. This plan of painting the face to match the soul saves a great deal of dialogue in the plays. A puppet villain, as soon as he enters the stage, can begin his wicked work of deception at once; he does not need to make remarks aside to inform the audience that he is not telling the truth, for they know by his face that he is a scoundrel and can speak nothing but falsehood.

I was sure that this was true as I looked at the wicked Moor in the showman's hand. Never was there such a miscreant as Almidoor. His very looks were murderous. He could never smile an honest smile with eyes that drooped so deceitfully and with his mouth pulled down at the corners in perpetual churlishness.

It is not extravagant to have each puppet made so he can act only one character, for it saves the time that would be needed to dress the puppets for different parts and to repaint their faces and remodel their limbs. And one actor can be used in many plays. The seven champions of Christendom were cast in seven different productions; each champion had a play of his own to star in; therefore each hero had many joints and strings. That was why the champions whirled around so while they were all fighting with the pagans and sometimes sailed through the air when they should have stayed on the ground. Of course, if there had been a puppet manager for each warrior, this confusion could have been avoided.

If the number of joints and strings in a puppet is a sign of higher evolution, then the dragon must have been a very superior being, for the human eye could scarcely count the number of strings that were used to convey that many-jointed toy with the shimmering spangled scales on its undulating journey across the stage.

Just how the dragon's head had been chopped off I could not comprehend, nor how Saint George's sword sliced through the neck with such a clean stroke, for on closer acquaintance, the flashing Ascalon proved to be very dull. It had to be blunt, the showman explained. He knew by



bitter experience, for in the very first performance of his play, Saint George had carried a well-sharpened sword and had almost spoiled the artistic effect of the scene by neatly severing Almidoor's strings, when he had only intended to behead him, and the villain was left helplessly hanging by one thread, to the great amusement of the audience. The dragon's heads were fastened on with hooks and loops. The head came off if the strings were jerked in just the right direction; but if an inexperienced puppeteer managed the dragon, Saint George had to keep hacking away with his sword for a long time until the manager succeeded in giving the beast's head just the right jerk. The surfaces where the head and neck joined were painted blood-red so they would look natural when the head was severed; but the stumps had healed before the last act when the monster appeared in England, for there were two dragons made exactly alike, except for the difference in the number of heads.

It is better to have twin actors if there is any change needed in costume or appearance, for there is so much danger of tangling the strings in the puppet's clothes that costumes must be fastened on carefully and quick changes cannot be made. The showman told me that, in a play called *The Princess in the Tower* that he had presented, two puppets acted the part of the Princess. They looked exactly alike except that one seemed to be in robust health and the other was pale from her imprisonment. In the last act the pale Princess was miraculously restored to health by the good fairy, and one doll was quickly substituted for the other, while the stage was dark for a second. That is

why the light kept flashing off and on every time the dragon changed his form in his last fight with Saint George. The showman had to keep his wits about him to manage each apparition's exits and entrances in the brief time between the flashes of light.

It is sometimes very handy to have two puppets painted alike, for if an accident happens to one of the actors, there is an understudy ready to step in and continue the play. The showman knew of several such cases. A puppet manager had to be very quick-witted and sometimes very clever, he said, to meet all the situations that might arise. Theodor Storm told a story of such an occurrence in his book, *Paul the Puppet Player*. The boy Paul had persuaded the showman's little girl to let him see the puppets in spite of her father's commands, and in handling one of them, the beloved funny Casper, he had injured one of the little actor's joints.

That night at the Faust play when Casper sprang onto the stage with his customary cry "Pardauz," Paul saw with relief that the wooden clown's comical expression and funny jointed nose set the audience to laughing as usual. "Wouldn't my father-papa be pleased if he saw me now!" cried the little actor. "He always told me to conduct myself so that my fortunes would be high, and are they not high when I can throw my knapsack as high as the house, and in it is all my fortune." Up flew the knapsack into the air; but, to the shame and sorrow of the miserable boy in the audience, Casper's arm remained fast to his side.

The quick-witted showman was equal to the occasion. Immediately Casper set up a great wailing and lamentation.

When the headservant, Wagner, entered and asked him why he was crying so hard, "My tooth, my little tooth," cried Casper. Wagner lifted the clown's flexible nose and, looking into Casper's mouth, declared, "It is a wisdom tooth."

"A wisdom tooth?" said the poor bewildered Casper. "That never happened before in our family. That is the end of my being a Casper."

"I cannot have a servant with a wisdom tooth," said Wagner. "Such things are only for us learned folk. But haven't you a nephew who also applied for this position? Perhaps he will take your place while you are at the hospital having your wisdom tooth removed." So the poor broken Casper was dismissed and a second Casper appeared in his stead. The understudy moved his arm easily, but he had not a remarkable thumb like his uncle's, nor a wonderful jointed nose.

Except for a journeyman tailor in the audience who whispered to his neighbour, "That is not in the play. I know, for I saw it a while ago at Leidersdorf," no one but the ingenious showman and the unhappy guilty boy knew that all was not as it should be on the stage.

"Ja," said the old German puppet player, when he was complimented on his presence of mind, "one has to have a little extra fun in one's pocket for such occasions."

"And truly," said the proprietor of Saint George, "it takes brains to be a puppet-showman. The art is not, as some folks suppose, a pastime for simple-minded people."

The puppets' manager must have tireless strength as well as wit, he continued, as I could see for myself if I would



Behind the Scenes at a Puppet Show.



climb up onto the stage-manager's bridge and watch him rehearse a play. Here high in the air, out of sight of the audience, was a platform, where the puppet players, one for each important character, stood and, bending far over the stage, guided each movement and gesture of the actors by pulling a string, and remembered to speak the lines for their charges. Girls spoke the women's speeches and men, the men's, and the puppet manager with the most resonant voice was always chosen to speak the part of the hero. The guardian angels swung the actors from their hooks onto the stage for their entrances and off to the hooks for their exits. It was hard work; the puppets' directors were tired and perspiring when the rehearsal was over.

It takes skill as well as strength to guide the puppets and it is not always easy to manage the actors. If a puppet knight stoops to pick up his sword, the sword must be raised by a string in perfect time with the movement of the hand that lifts it, or the effect will not be convincing.

And once let a puppet's strings fall or become tangled with another actor's and who knows what may happen? But well guided puppets were usually well behaved, the showman said, as he tied the actors in calico sacks to keep the dust of travel from their costumes and packed them all compactly in a big box.

"No artistic temperament, such as live actors have, to worry the manager?" I asked.

"No," said my new friend, "I remember what a famous showman of Italy said:

"There is one decided advantage that I have over other impresarios. They are always tormented by the demands,



the caprices, and rebellions of their actors; but my little company of wooden and rag players never cause me any of those troubles. My rivals are often made to suffer martyrdom by the unreasonable tyranny of the prima donna, or that chief of all tyrants, the leading man. They are always worried because this lady has got a cold and won't



Once let their strings tangle.

sing, or that gentleman is absorbed in love affairs or drink or imprisoned for debt and can't appear. And then the dissatisfactions that arise about the distribution of parts and the deadly jealousies and hatreds that break out among the actors and often mar the success of the pieces! But I have none of these troubles. My company have no caprices, no jealousies, no tempers, no debts, no colds; they never quar-

rel with me or with one another, and best of all, they never ask me for money. They are never late to rehearsal or missing at the performance; and when they are through with the play—whack!—I throw them into my box and lock them up. Ministers of State who manage kingdoms have been perplexed by the problem of controlling a royal company of actors and actresses. But a child could manage my puppets.’ No, marionettes have their faults as actors, but they are only difficult to manage on the stage, never off.”

“But you were well paid for your trouble,” I said, on our way out as we passed through the curtain into the empty theatre. “The children certainly were pleased.”

“Yes, it looks as if they had enjoyed themselves.” The showman laughed as he pointed to the floor. The gallery where the audience had been sitting was carpeted with peanut shells.



## IV

### The Celebrated Punch Family

“But see, there is one little mannikin strutting ahead of the  
others.

He roars in a terrible voice. See, even the buckle that  
fastens

His waistcoat is larger than theirs are; rotund and enormous  
his stomach;

A mammoth hump grows on his back. With what a mag-  
nificent ogle

His staring eyes roll in their sockets and frighten his pigmy  
companions;

He sets them all wide-eyed and trembling with fear at the  
wrath of this giant.

Relying upon his huge bulk and trusting his unexcelled  
biceps,

He hurls the most insolent taunts at the others too small to  
resent them;

And for emphasis bobs his great head and widens his grin in  
derision.

Even on solemn occasions, in scenes of high pomp and great  
splendour,

Ignoring the anguish his rudeness produces, he interrupts  
gaily

And spoils the effect with his nonsense.”

Translated from Addison's *Machinæ Gesticulantes*.

## The Celebrated Punch Family

SPEAKING of puppets, what has become of Mr. and Mrs. Punch? They used to live in the dime museum, where you paid ten cents to see them with their neighbours, the fat woman and the bearded lady and the living skeleton. That is, they lived there in the winter; but when the trees budded in the spring, it is said they took to the road and any day they might appear beneath your window, like the organ grinder with his monkey; and for a few coppers you could see Punch perpetrate his delightful crimes—over and over again too, if you could get pennies enough to jingle into his dog Toby's cup and set the bells to tinkling on his collar.

A charming villain was Punch. We admired him for the high hand he took with constituted authority and we loved him for his light-heartedness. Even though he committed all the crimes on the court calendar, what was that to Punch? Let others do the worrying. As for him, life was only a jest.

His sins were easily forgiven. It is true that he committed murder, but his victims always came back to life and bobbed up in the next performance. They must have known what would happen to them, for they had felt the weight of Mr. Punch's club repeatedly. We knew, and we had seen him wield his bludgeon only a score or so of times. If he was ugly one moment, he would be jolly the next,



blowing his little whistle and marching up and down as "pleased as Punch." Who would believe that his body was nothing but a head and hands dressed up, and the soul that kept him alive, only two fingers and a thumb? For Mr. Punch was not a marionette, like Saint George, who obeyed a pull of the strings; the manager wore him on his hand like a glove and induced those expressive nods and ges-



tures with his fingers inside the actor's head and arms. But of course no evidence of this discipline showed through the window of Punch's house, where he performed his play. To all appearances he was the sole lord of the establishment.

I can see him now, peeking out from behind the curtain to count the audience and see if there were enough moneyed patrons with pennies to make it worth while beginning his

play. I can hear his Root-to-to-to too-it. I can see the gay coloured booth with its flowered curtain and the proprietor, a dashing sun-burned fellow with a gorgeous handkerchief, who was evidently far above having to wash his hands and brush his hair. He stood beside the little house on stilts and talked to Punch through the window, drawing out his opinion on various timely subjects and showing him off to the audience with great pride and delight in the wicked little fellow's joyous crimes. I can see the merry little villain with his chin turned up and his nose turned down, as he bounced up in his red and green coat and his red and yellow pointed hat and made his queer little bobbing bow. I can hear him speak his opening piece, talking through his nose,

"Ladies and gentlemen, how do you do?

If you are happy, I am happy too.

Stop and hear my jolly little play;

If it makes you laugh, I will make you pay."

As soon as this announcement was made Punch disappeared below the window, but we knew the play would begin at once.

In a moment there was Punch again with his club under his arm, marching up and down to the tune of his Root-to-to-to-too-it.

"Ow de do, Mr. Punch," said the gentleman with the gay coloured handkerchief. It was not difficult to tell where he had learned his English, for he had absent mindedly mislaid his h's.

"'Ow's your own 'ealth?" mimicked the saucy puppet. "Have you seen my wife Judy?"

"Have I seen your wife?" The proprietor pretended he was surprised. "I never knowed as 'ow you was married, Mr. Punch."

"No? Too bad!" Punch wagged his head. "I'll call her. Judy, Judy! My dear!"

"What do you want?" piped the lady from below.

"Come up!" commanded her lord and master.

So up came Mrs. Judy in her blue and white calico dress and white cap and apron, bobbing and waving her arms. There was quite a family resemblance between her and Punch, but her nose and her chin were not so long. Her voice was shriller than his too. "What do you want?" squeaked Judy.

"A kiss!" squawked her loving husband, but Judy only slapped his face.

"Oh, what a smack!" cried Punch, rubbing his cheek. "And here's one for you." And the wicked Mr. Punch hit his wife over the head with his stick, for that was his idea of a joke.

"Oh, Mr. P.," protested the showman, "that's werry wrong!"

"Why, haven't I a right to do what I like with my own?"

"In course he has," said Judy, returning her husband's blow.

"Judy, my dear," said Mr. Punch after this slight misunderstanding was over, "go and fetch the baby." While Judy was below stairs her husband recounted her virtues. "Isn't she a beauty, my Judy? Beauty Judy, Judy Beauty,

Judy Beaudy. I mean Juty Beauty; no, Juty Beaudy—you know what I mean, Mr. Showman. Ah, here's the darling baby! Come to papa," cried Punch as he grabbed his son and heir by its long dresses and swung the infant back and forth across the stage.

"Hush-a-bye-baby,  
On the tree-top.  
When the wind blows,  
The cradle will rock.  
When the bough breaks,  
The cradle will fall.  
Down will come cradle  
And baby and all."

Then if we applauded his solo, Punch would sing an encore.

"Hush-a-bye-baby,  
Sleep while you can.  
If you live till you're older,  
You'll grow up a man."

"What a beautiful baby it is!" exclaimed the proud parent. "He looks just like his father." At this we couldn't keep from laughing because the child's face was just as different from Mr. Punch's as a face could be. The baby's nose turned up instead of down and its chin scarcely showed at all. "He has his father's nose! See," cried Punch. "Murder! Let go of it!" he screamed, dancing up and

down in agony. "Oh, my poor nose! My beautiful, beautiful nose!"

But Master Punch only said "Mam-ma-ma-ma!" And Punch knocked the baby's head against the window casing.

"Be quiet, can't you?" Punch hit his child again. "There! There! Go to your mother," and the cruel



*Mister Punch threw his son out of the window.*

father threw his child down into the room below. Sometimes Punch threw his son out of the window, and then there was a scramble. But faithful Toby always came after the baby and brought it back in his mouth.

"Root-to-to-to-to-to-too-it!" sang the depraved father. "Now play up," he said to the proprietor, "and we'll have a little dance." So the versatile chap out in front took a mouth-organ from his pocket and performed a lively solo

while Punch and Judy frisked and bobbed about with their arms over each other's shoulders. Suddenly Judy stopped; she missed something. "Where's the baby?"

"The baby?" said Punch in a guileless tone.

"Yes, where is the child?" demanded his wife.

"The child?" How innocent the rogue was!



"What have you done with it?" Judy knew her husband too well to believe him guiltless.

"Done with it? Why, didn't you catch him?"

"Catch him!" shrieked Judy.

"Yes, I threw him out of the window! I thought you might be passing," said the rascal airily.

"Oh, my poor child!" Judy wept. "Oh, you cruel monster!" she screamed at Punch. "I'll tear your eyes out!"

"Root-to-to-to-too-it! How she goes on! What a fuss she makes about the child!"



"Oh, you wicked brute to throw the child out of the window!"

"Don't cry, Judy! I'll never do it again."

"I'll teach you to drop my child out of the window." The anxious mother hit her husband on both sides of the head.

"Oh, I don't think you're a good teacher. Your lessons are too hard. I'll teach you a lesson or two!" and Punch hit Judy such a blow that she fell over the window-sill and lay there quite still, with the red ribbon on her bonnet hanging limply down.

"Mr. Punch, that was werry, werry naughty!" said the showman.

"Root-to-to-to-to-to-too-it!" sang the bereaved husband and hummed the song, "Pop goes the weasel," to the same tune that the showman had performed so creditably upon his pocket organ.

Mr. Joseph, the clown, was the next person to try Punch's club. "Hullo, Mr. Punch," he said and disappeared as soon as he came.

"Who called me?" Punch looked around and, seeing no one, kept on singing,

"I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls  
With vassals and serfs by my si-i-ide—"

The clown picked up the limp form of Mrs. Judy and poked its head into Punch's face. Punch threw the body back onto the window sill. "Ah, Joey! Was that you?"

"No, indeed, it was I," said Mr. Joey, bobbing his white painted face at Punch. "Boo!"

"Don't do that again, Joey," begged his friend, "because I am nervous. Come and feel how my hand shakes." But as the clown approached, he had to dodge Punch's club. "Come a little nearer, Joey. I won't hurt you, honest," promised Punch. "There, it didn't hurt you, did it?" he asked, as Joey avoided the blow intended for him.

"No!"

"Nor that?" Punch made another failure.

"Not a bit."

"Then what did you jump for?" Punch laughed as the clown ducked down to escape a blow aimed at his head. "You're afraid of me, aren't you, Joey?"

"Me afraid?" Joey rushed at Punch. "I'll show you who's afraid." Punch lifted his stick and Joey disappeared. But in a moment there he was again, right behind Punch. "Hullo, Mr. Punch," he cried and, before his friend could turn around, the clown had bobbed up in another place. "Here I am," he said.

"Where are you, Joey? Ah! I see you now." Punch laid down his stick and peeped cautiously around the curtains. "Now I've got him," he cried.

But Joey grabbed the stick and belaboured the back of Punch's head. "And now you've got him, how do you like him?" he asked.

Punch rubbed his crown. "Murder," he cried. "Fire! Thieves! Help! Toby, come and help your master!" A dog's bark was heard below and Joey disappeared in a flash. Toby jumped up on the window sill, wagging his

tail. "Good doggy," said Punch patting him, "I knew you'd come to help your master."

When Toby saw Punch take up the stick, he snarled.

"What, Toby! you cross this morning? You got out of bed the wrong way upward."

Toby only growled.



"Here I am!"

"Be quiet," threatened Punch, "or I'll knock your brains out."

"Don't go to 'urt the dog, Mr. P.," the showman protested. "That hain't the way to treat a hanimal."

"He knows I won't hurt him," said Punch. "Poor little Toby, come here." But the beast snapped at him. "Oh, my nose!" shrieked Mr. Punch. "You shall pay for this!"

As Punch lifted his stick to strike the dog Toby barked

and ran away and the club nearly hit Joey, who was just coming up.

"Hullo!" said the clown, dodging. "Why, that's my dog Toby. Toby, old fellow, how are you?" Toby barked below.

"He isn't your dog, he's mine," said Punch.

"He is too mine!"

"No, he isn't yours."

"He is, I tell you!" Joey insisted. "A fortnight ago I lost him."

"And a fortnight ago I found him," said Punch. "Let's fight for him," he suggested and began the battle at once with his stick.

"No," cried Joey, as he dodged the blows, "I won't. You don't fight fair!"

"Oh, I'll fight fair enough," promised Punch.

"Do you think he will, Mister?" the clown asked the proprietor.

"I should think as 'ow he would, Joey, if so be as he calls hisself a gentleman," the showman answered him. "Now, Mr. Punch, fight fair and don't you begin till I say 'Time.'"

But Punch threw his opponent down.

"It isn't fair," cried Joey, jumping up. "He didn't say 'Time.'"

"Mr. Punch, that was a foul blow," said the showman.

"Why, you said 'Time,' didn't you?" said Punch as innocent as anything, knocking Joey down, but Clown had had enough; he ran away. "Joey, you're a coward," called Punch. "You're afraid of being hit! Root-to-to-to-to-to-

too-it," he sang. But in a second he stopped and put his head down, as if he were listening. "What's that?" he whispered to the showman.

We heard mysterious music and a frightful vision appeared, all in white with staring eyes. It placed its skinny hands upon the body of Punch's wife, which rose slowly



and dropped into the stage. "Boo-oo-o-o-oh!" said the Ghost, pointing its finger at the murderer.

"Ooo-o-o-o-oh!" said Punch and fainted backwards over the window sill, as the Ghost slowly sank from sight. Pretty soon he lifted his head. "Oh, dear!" he whispered. "I'm a dead man. Somebody fetch a doctor."

No sooner was the medical adviser sent for than he was there. "Here am I, the Doctor," he announced. "Does some poor sufferer require my services? I will at once at-

tend him. Why, I declare, if I am not deceived, it is my old friend Punch. What mischance has befallen one usually in such robust health?" He felt the patient's pulse. "It is impossible to believe that he has expired. Mr. Punch, have you given up the ghost?"

"Yes, I gave him up gladly," said Punch. "You would too, if you had only seen him. Brr!"

"No, no, Mr. Punch; in my profession, one soon loses all fear of ghosts."

"They haven't a ghost of a chance with you, hey?" Mr. Punch sneered; and he raised his head from the window sill.

The Doctor ignored the jest. "You are not killed, Mr. Punch?" he said. "No one was ever killed by a ghost."

"Not killed, but speechless," moaned Punch.

"Where are you hurt?" The Doctor examined his patient. "Is it here, on the pericranium?" and he touched Punch's head.

"No; lower," moaned Punch.

"Here, in your handsome thoracic cavity?" The Doctor touched his patient's chest.

"No; lower still."

"Then is your right motor appendage broken?" He examined Punch's leg.

"No," said Punch and kicked the Doctor with his left "motor appendage."

"Oh, my eye," cried the Doctor. "I must go at once and fetch some physic."

"A pretty sort of doctor, to come without any physic," sneered Punch.



Back came the Doctor with a stick. "Now, Mr. Punch, we'll soon ascertain whether you are dead or not. This is the medicine to revive you."

"What sort of physic do you call that, Doctor?"

"Stick-liquorice, stick-liquorice," answered the physic'an, giving Punch a good dose of the stick.

"Stop a bit!" cried Punch. "Give me the bottle in my own hands." He snatched the stick and thrashed the Doctor with it.

"Oh, Mr. Punch, for goodness' sake stop! Oh, good, kind Mr. Punch, please pay my bill and let me go!" begged the poor Doctor.

"How much do you want?" asked Punch, reaching for his stick.

"Five pounds is my fee."

"Can you give me the change out of a twopenny half-penny postage stamp?"

"Mr. Punch, you are too facetious. I must have five pounds."

"Then here they are," laughed Punch, taking up the stick. "One, two, three, four, five pounds and hard ones too!" The physician fell lifeless. "The bill's settled and so is the Doctor," crowed Punch. "The Doctor took his own physic and died of it! Ha! ha! Root-to-to-to-too-it!"

Then the stern arm of the law appeared in the person of a blue-coated Policeman, swinging his club from his wrist. Punch greeted him with the same wicked leer he gave the mere unofficial public.

"Hullo," he said, "what have we here?"

"Wh-wh-who are y-y-you?" stammered the brave Policeman, peering at Punch through his great glasses.

"Me? Why, I'm Mr. Punch, I'm Mr. Nell, I'm Mr. Lo, I'm Mr. Punchinello!"

"Th-th-th-then I m-m-m-must arrest all f-four of you. C-c-come with me," stuttered the Officer.

"Indeed, and wh-wh-wh-wh-wh-who are you?" Punch was making fun of his guest's hesitating speech.

"Why, Mr. P-Punch! D-d-don't you know me?"

"No, and I don't want to know you!" said the saucy villain.

"N-n-no n-n-n-nonsense with me, Mr. P-Punch. I am the C-c-constable, the B-B-Beadle, Ch-Churchwarden, G-g-gate-keeper and St-st-st-stipendiary Magistrate of the P-Parish."

"So you are a stupidiary magistrate. Well, so am I."

"Y-y-you!" The Policeman stared over his spectacles in his astonishment. "Then wh-where's your authority?"

"There it is!" Punch knocked him down with his stick.

"Mr. P-Punch, you are my p-p-prisoner," said the Officer, trying to take the stick away. "For b-b-breaking the laws of your c-c-c-country."

"Why, I never touched them," said the innocent Punch.

"You," said the constable, "have c-committed infantic-c-c-cide, uxoric-c-c-cide, and m-m-m-medicide, n-n-n-namely and t-to wit m-m-murder, and you must answer for your cr-crimes. To p-prison you shall go for cr-cr-cruel treatment of your f-f-f-f-f-f-f-family."

"Throw him into the lake; throw him out of the window!" screamed Punch, hitting the constable with his stick.

"Mr. P-Punch," said the Officer, "you have n-now c-c-committed an aggravated assault and c-c-contempt of c-c-c-court, and I am under the p-p-painful n-n-n-necessity of t-t-taking you up."

"And I am under the painful necessity of knocking you down." Punch killed the Policeman with a blow. "It hurts me more than it does you," said he, pretending to weep, and then suddenly he burst out laughing.

"Now, Mr. Punch, you 'ave done it," said the showman.

"Yes, I've done it. What a day we are having!" said Punch. "Root-to-to-to-to-to-to-too-it!"

Then Jack Ketch, the Hangman, came up, carrying the gallows under his arm. "Now, Mr. Punch," he said briskly, "you are ordered for instant execution."

"What's that?" Punch asked.

"You are to be hanged by the neck till you are dead! dead! dead!"

"What! Are you planning to hang me three times! Oh, don't!" pleaded Punch, trembling.

"No, once will be enough, and I hope it will be a lesson to you."

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" Punch wept into his sleeve. "Oh, my poor wife and sixteen small children, and the oldest only two and a half years old! But stop a bit, there. I haven't made my will."

"A good idea," the Hangman nodded, "you must make it at once. We can't think of letting a man die till he's made his will."

"Oh," laughed Punch. "Then I won't make mine at all!"

But the Hangman only set up his gallows. "Come, justice can't wait. Put your neck in this loop."

Punch bent his head at one side of the rope. "This way?" he asked.

"No, no; in the center of the noose."

"Oh, this way then?" Punch bowed his head on the other side.

"No; higher up," said the Hangman, and the wily Punch put his head above the loop.

"Here?"

"No, lower down."

Down went Punch's head below the noose. "But I never was hanged before, so how should I know how it's done?" he explained.

"Well, I suppose it's only right I should show you the way then." The Hangman laid his own head in the noose. "Now, Mr. Punch, observe me and you shall have an instructive lesson. Now then, you see my head?"

"Yes," said Punch.

"Well, in the first place, I put my head in the noose properly—so."

"I see," said Punch.

"Very well then," said the executioner. "Now imagine you are I and I am you. I, that is you, have my head in the noose thus, and you, that is I, of course, will pull the rope."

Punch touched the rope just a little. "So?" he said.

"Yes," the Hangman answered, his head still in the noose. "We will now exchange places, for the lesson is over and the hanging must begin."

"Wait just a minute!" Punch put up his hand. "There is something I don't understand; and that is just how hard shall I jerk the rope?" And before Jack Ketch knew what had happened to him, the clever Punch had pulled the noose tight and the Hangman dangled helplessly from his own



gallows. "Oee! Oee! Oee!" chortled Mr. Punch. "I understand all about it. Here's a man tumbled into a ditch, and hung himself up to dry!"

But while he was laughing, a horrid, dreadful personage rose at the back of the stage and tapped him on his shoulder. "You're come for," he croaked in a frightful voice.

When Punch saw that copper-coloured creature with the

horns and hoofs, he retreated as far as the walls of his stage would permit. "Who are you?" he asked, trembling.

Said the Horrid Dreadful Personage in a deep voice, "I am the Devil."



"The devil you are!" answered Punch, regaining his courage.

"The devil I am," came in the same deep voice.

"Well—what the devil do you want?" squeaked Punch.

"You!" said the Personage in awful tones. "To take

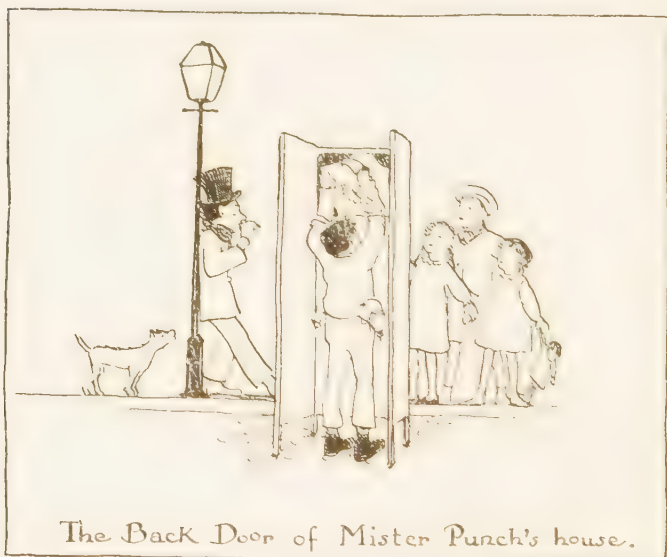


you to the other world where you must answer for your crimes."

But Punch had a better idea. "Stop a bit!" he said craftily. "Whom were you to ask for?"

"Why, Punch, the man who was to be hanged."

"Oh! The man that was to be hanged! Then that's the



gentleman you want!" and he pointed to the Hangman dangling from the rope.

"Oh, is that him? Thanks!" and the Personage carried off the Hangman's body. Punch hit the sinking devil with his stick.

"Good night!" he said. "Pleasant journey to you! Hurrah! Hurrah! Root-to-to-to-too-it!"

“Punch you see is always jolly,  
All his foes are put to flight;  
Ladies and gentlemen all, good-night  
To the freaks of Punch and Judy.”

And the showman said good bye too, with his handkerchief in one hand and his cap in the other. “Ladies and gentlemen,” he announced, “the drayma is coneluded, and has you like it, so I ’opes you’ll recommend it.” Then he folded up Punch’s house, with the amusing little villain and his victims carefully packed inside, and trudged off, with the stage on his back and Toby following, to find a place where there was a new supply of pennies.



V

The Strange History of Mr. Punch

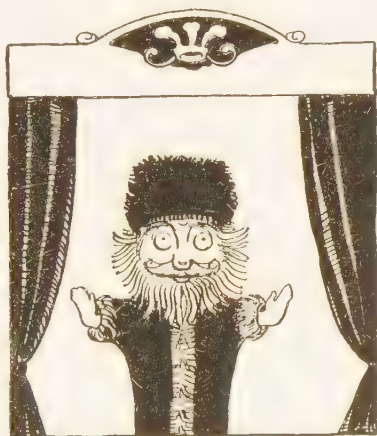
“Now he goes on, and sings of fairs and shows,  
For still new fairs before his eyes arose:  
How pedlars’ stalls with glittering toys are laid,  
The various fairings of the country-maid:  
Long silken laces hang upon the twine,  
And rows of pins and amber bracelets shine: . . .

“The mountebank now treads the stage, and sells  
His pills, his balsams, and his ague-spells;  
Now o’er and o’er the nimble tumbler springs  
And on the rope the venturous maiden swings;  
Jack Pudding in his party-colour’d jacket  
Tosses the glove, and jokes at every packet:  
Of rareeshows he sung, and Punch’s feats,  
Of pockets pick’d in crowds and various cheats.”

From *The Shepherd’s Week*, by JOHN GAY.

## The Strange History of Mr. Punch

WHERE Mr. Punch has gone we do not know. But there was no doubt in our minds where he came from. He was a thorough Englishman. In England Punch appears much more frequently than in America, but not so often as when our grandfathers were young, for in their day the Punch



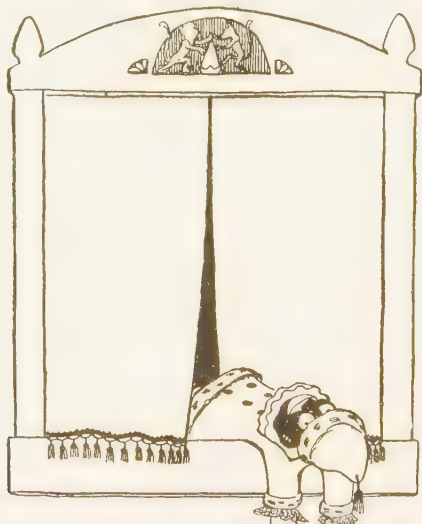
*The Distinguished Foreigner.*

family was flourishing and the profession of exhibiting puppets was a more profitable business than it is now.

Punch had not always so many adventures as he had in the play we saw and sometimes he had more. He often played a scene in which he cruelly ill treated an old blind beggar and another scene in which he conversed with a distinguished foreigner, as well as one could converse with a person who solemnly answered every remark with



the words, "Shallaballa." When Punch asked him, "Why don't you speak English?" he answered, "Because I can't." This travelled linguist was supposed to be "the Hospodar of Wallachia," but in spite of his titled position, he was forced to bow before the authority of Mr. Punch's club just as if he were a person of no importance at all.



*The Same Sad Fate Everyone Met*

Sometimes a neighbour appeared at Mr. Punch's door, or else sent a negro servant in gorgeous livery, to complain of the "nawsty noise" Mr. Punch was making by ringing his great bell. But Punch insisted that the sound of the bell was music. To this the black critic would not agree, but he was forced, at the gentle suggestion of Punch's club, to admit that the bell was not only music but an organ, a fiddle, a drum, and a trumpet. Even this complete

capitulation would not satisfy Punch, and the lackey succumbed to the same sad fate every one met at Punch's hands.

In some performances, Punch rode a horse named Hector and it was a fall from Hector's back that summoned the doctor to Punch's aid and to his own untimely death.

There was a hard-featured, respectable tradesman named Mr. Jones who occasionally appeared in Mr. Punch's play



and claimed to be the rightful owner of Toby. Mr. Jones proposed that he and Punch should toss up for Toby, but, although Punch chose heads and Toby came down tail first, Mr. Punch insisted that the dog's head was his because he had said, "Heads," and he clung so tightly to the part of Toby he claimed was his that Mr. Jones could get nothing but the dog's tail. But as the respectable Mr. Jones could pull harder than Punch could, for once the villainous little hero was defeated.

Some showmen introduced Mr. Punch to a person who said he was a Courtier. He was in truth a gentleman of very solemn deportment, but he had an elastic neck which lengthened tremendously and sent Punch into paroxysms of fear. This talented actor's name was Scaramouch and of course Mr. Punch pronounced it Scare 'em much.

Sometimes a lady, whom Punch called Pretty Poll, ap-



peared after poor Judy's untimely death, and Punch was off with the old love and on with the new at once. Pretty Poll was such a graceful dancer that Mr. Punch attempted to win her favour by exhibiting his own clumsy steps. But when he tried to dance with her, she whirled around the stage so airily that all he could do was to turn around like a windmill, with his arms outstretched, and follow her with his eyes. But as soon as Mr. Punch began to sing down his nose, Pretty Poll could not resist his charm and she

accepted his attentions quite willingly, even allowing him to dance a jig with her.

Though the characters in Punch's play might change, the plot was always the same, and, no matter what puppets he met, Punch treated them all alike, that is, he treated them to a severe beating with his club and tossed them over the window-sill as gaily as he had disposed of his family and his other acquaintances. The showmen gave the play just as they had heard it, with a few changes, although they introduced any other puppets they might have into Mr. Punch's scenes.

Punch, however, was always ready to change his bill, for he loved to imitate people and he made fun of every one. When Sir Herbert Tree was presenting *Henry the Eighth* at His Majesty's Theatre in London, Punch strutted about his booth out in front of the theatre as "*Henry the Twenty-eighth*." He arranged his eight wives in a row and asked each one if she wanted the ballot. Seven of the ladies refused, but Anne Boleyn said, "Yes," and was immediately sentenced to lose her head. Her life was saved because the executioner's axe slipped and neatly beheaded Punch instead. Such parodies as this were well enough to amuse grown people, but children liked the old play best.

With one showman and another Mr. Punch trudged about the streets, accompanied by Toby and his cup, or jogged along the country roads of England. He picked up his expenses wherever there was a crowd of admirers collected, showing his play at the cross roads, or in the town market-place, or under the sign at the village tavern.

When times were good, they stopped at the inn, and Punch very easily paid for his master's lodging and entertainment by furnishing another sort of entertainment for the landlord's family and the guests. And you may be sure if Punch did not appear in the puppet-show, that the audience was never perfectly satisfied.

"I would by no means degrade the ingenuity of your profession, but I should have been glad to have seen my old acquaintance, Master Punch," said Tom Jones frankly to the showman at the inn on the road from Upton to Coventry. "And so far from improving, I think by leaving out him and his merry wife, Joan"—Punch's wife was called Joan in those days—"you have spoiled your puppet-show." According to Tom Jones' biographer, Henry Fielding, the showman's play "was indeed a very grave and solemn entertainment, without any low wit or humour or jests; or to do it no more than justice, without anything which could provoke a laugh."

"Very probably, sir," answered the manager of the "rational entertainment" in which there was not a single joke, "that may be your opinion; but I have the satisfaction to know the best judges differ from you, and it is impossible to please every taste. I confess, indeed, some of the quality at Bath, two or three years ago, wanted mightily to bring Punch again upon the stage. I believe I lost some money for not agreeing to it."

When the landlords were not hospitable or the public not generous, Punch and his guardian, the showman, slept beneath the stars or took shelter from the storm under the trees at the side of the road. But Punch was always

protected from the elements, for he was safely packed in the little stage that the puppet player carried on his back as he journeyed from town to town.

It was when Mr. Punch and his proprietor had stopped in the village churchyard to rest that they met Little Nell and her grandfather, and the kind-hearted little girl mended the rent in Mrs. Judy's dress, while Mr. Short Trotter, the showman, explained that "it wouldn't do to let the audience see the present company undergoing repair. . . . It would destroy the delusion."

Mr. Punch had travelled the highways with one showman or another, from the time when men journeyed on horse-back and women always rode pillion and the road was beset with dangers for the solitary traveller whom nightfall found short of his destination. He had seen the passing vehicles change from the open stage wagon to the closed mail coach, and he had travelled with people of all times: men in brave slashed doublets and trunk hose; and women with stiff farthingales and ruffs; curled and ruffled cavaliers swaggering in wide boots and velvet breeches, and dames in hooded coats over rich silks and satins; gallants strutting in full-skirted coats, with jaunty three-cornered hats above their periwigs; gentlemen striding in top-boots and in beavers; and ladies wrapped in caped coats. All these fashionable people were in Punch's audiences too during the three hundred years he played in England. So were the peasants he met on the road, and the smocked boys riding farm horses, with red-checked lasses bouncing behind them, and the country gentlemen jolting along in their gigs, while the Royal Mail, and the Regulator, and the Old Bell, or



the Angel rolled by "on their eagle flight," as Mr. Micawber said.

Usually when people passed Punch on the road, they were on their way to the market. As they neared the town where the fair was held, the roads were so thronged with sheep and cattle and their buyers and sellers that Punch's master could scarcely make his way through the crowd, and the box-stage on his back was covered with dust.

But Punch pushed ahead, for he must hurry to be early at the fair. He could not wait for the ceremony of opening the gates, when the mayor of the town and the officials would carry the huge key through the streets to announce that the fair had begun, for his booth must be ready to receive the first comers. The children usually came to the festivities in the early hours of the day and they were always Punch's favourite patrons as well as his best customers.

He had been attending every fair in England for hundreds of years. Almost all the celebrated actors, both wooden and human, visited the country fairs. Before Shakespeare's day companies of strolling players went about England acting wherever there was a special festival and they journeyed to all the fairs and set up their booths near Mr. Punch's. During the Puritan suppression of the drama, the finest actors in England fled to the country districts for protection from the persecution they suffered in the towns. Theatrical managers from the city admitted stage-struck youths from the neighbourhood into their companies, and many a tragedian served his apprenticeship on the trestles at the country fairs. Punch saw the boy actor,



Edmund Kean, playing at the fairs, and he learned many tricks of the trade from the London stars.

Punch was ever a mimic, and whenever he saw any rival attraction, especially if it pleased the onlookers, he did not hesitate to imitate it and hold it up to ridicule if he could. His awkward bobbing dancing was a clumsy imitation of the graceful Italian dancers at the fair. So well did he mimic the fellow in a fool's coat, with a trumpet and drum, who invited people to see the plays, that soon Punch took the jester's place and called out his own attraction. His clever duel at dodging with his friend Joey was an imitation of the jingling matches, in which the boys wore bells on their clothes and played blindman's buff.

Punch was a master at cudgel play. He had learned to break heads by watching the farmer boys at the fair in their bouts with a quarterstaff. From his booth across the churchyard he probably watched the very cudgel match that impressed Tom Brown so much. This was in Wessex, at the "Veast" in the Vale of the White Horse.

Punch saw Tom too, "his hat and coat covered with ribbands and his pockets crammed with fairings and popguns and trumpets and apples and gilt gingerbread from the stall of Angel Heavens," who was an artist at making the delicious brown cakes. Angel Heavens and his fellows baked their gingerbread men, and birds and beasts and buildings, in such elaborate forms that nowadays all unnecessary ornamentation is called gingerbread. Tom's cheeks were probably full of gingerbread too, for this was the year he was eight years old, the summer before he went to the famous school at Rugby. Perhaps Toby, the turn-

spit terrier who went fishing with Tom and old Benjy, was named for Punch's dog. Who knows?

Punch saw all the celebrities that attended the fair, you may be sure, and they all saw him too, for he was one of the best advertised attractions there. His shrill whistle drowned out the calls of the clowns and jack-puddings who were shaking their bladder-sticks and shouting jests and trying to persuade the crowd of pleasure-seekers to step into a tent and eat roast meat, or to buy a nostrum for their ills, or to see the learned pig, who was so well educated that he could tell cards and numbers when he saw them, and whose name was usually Toby too.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Punch's proprietor would cry, "walk in and see a tragical, comical, operatical, pantomimical Olla Podrida of Smiles, Tears, Broad Grins, and Horse-laughs."

"Root-to-to-to-to-too-it," crowed Punch louder than all the shouts of the venders and the cries of the ballad sellers. He called to the yokels from the country, who wandered about the grounds taking a turn at the merry-go-rounds, admiring the acrobats and jugglers, wondering at Hocus Pocus, the sleight-of-hand performer, and holding their breath at the sword swallows and the fire eaters. Punch had his eye on the money they were wasting in trinkets for the ladies and in games of chance. It would be much safer in Toby's cup than it was in the countrymen's pockets, for they would surely lose it to those light-fingered gentry who were as clever as the conjurers themselves at making purses disappear or as nimble as the jugglers in extracting gold from them.

There was so much to see and listen to that sometimes the buyers neglected to visit the gaily decorated booths, where the merchants had spread out their wares temptingly, and the tents where the farmers were waiting to sell their cattle and cheeses. This was the real business of the fair; the entertainments were merely to attract people to the market. Foreign merchants too came to the English fairs with wines and furs, fine laces and jewels, and strange drugs and spices from the far East. Everything was sold at the fairs,

“Lawn as white as driven snow;  
Cypress black as e’er was crow;  
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;  
Masks for faces and for noses,”

and all the rest of the trumpery that Autolycus sold at the sheep-shearing in *A Winter’s Tale*.

The sheep-shearing was often the occasion of a fair and Punch visited not only the wool markets, but the leather and beef fairs that were held at various times. At all of them amusements flourished and Punch and the other puppets reaped a golden harvest from the crowds of pleasure-seeking visitors.

Like all the established attractions, Mr. Punch had his regular place in these cities of tents and booths, where he appeared year after year. So the young country people knew just where to find him, even if his screaming “Root-to-to-to-too-it” and his satellite’s fife and drum did not locate him for them. The gallant young gentlemen from the town too, with their canes covered with ribbons, and rib-

bons in their velvet buttonholes, and with elegantly dressed ladies on their arms, all found their way to the puppet-show before the fair was ended.

"Aug. 3, 1667," wrote Mr. Pepys in his famous diary. "To Bartholomew Fair, to walk up and down, and there among other things, found my Lady Castlemaine at a puppet-play, Patient Grizill; and the street full of people expecting her coming out."

If Punch had no part in a puppet play, he would speak the prologue, or give an interlude between the acts, or appear after the last curtain and amuse the audience with a little imitation of the chief actor in the play; so, even when the performance was dull, Punch sent every one home in a good humour.

The crowds around his booth increased rapidly till sunset. But when darkness fell on the field, and torches flared out in front of the tents and flickered along the smaller stalls and shows, and thousands of little lamps made coloured stars and anchors over the booths, then Punch rang down his curtain for the night and went to watch the young folks dancing in the great tents. When the last cudgel play was settled and all the trinkets were sold and the juggler had packed up his cup and balls, Punch too and his company of players were shut up in their portable theatre. They started off with the showman for the festivals of St. John the Baptist and St. Werburgh at Chester, or for the fair at Winchester on St. Giles' day, or they went to Essex to set up their booth under the great Fairlop oak. In August Punch appeared at Smithfield just outside of London, and there, next to the Crown Tavern in the angle of the city

wall, he showed his pranks at Bartholomew Fair, which was founded by another jester. It was Rahere, who resigned his position as Henry the First's minstrel and court fool to turn monk and build St. Bartholomew's church, for which the fair was named. Punch had frequent business at Croydon, as there was a fair there every month in the year. The October sheep and cattle markets closed the season's tour; but in the very cold winters there was a "Frost Fair" on the frozen Thames. All the booths and attractions of the regular fair were there and Punch's patrons came with sleds and skates to see his play.

When the roads grew too muddy for travel or the snows too deep, Mr. Punch no longer tramped his way from village to village or fair to fair. He walked the streets of London and his shrill whistle mingled with the din of the great city, with the rattling of coaches and the cries of the street. The calls of the chimney-sweep, the milk-venders, the news-criers, the tinker and bellows-mender made a deafening accompaniment to Punch's Root-to-to-to-too-it. Although they were his competitors, these noisy tradesmen were his customers too, and many a penny from the pie-man's pocket and the broom-seller's money bags found its way into Toby's cup.

The gentlemen and ladies who rattled by in the coaches were his patrons. The beaux of St. James's deserted the park, the gaming tables and the masquerades, and carried their snuff-boxes to Punch's playhouse, for Mr. Punch had an established residence in the eighteenth century, the Augustan age of puppets. From two o'clock in the afternoon until late evening the sedan chairs stopped before the

southeast Piazza at Covent Garden, where Mr. Punch resided in his prosperous days and fine ladies alighted at the door of Punch's house. Before the fire of 1769, when this part of the Piazza was destroyed and the famous puppet theatre was burned, Punch gave his plays there every day from ten o'clock in the morning until ten at night.

From Punch's theatre under the arches of the Piazza, the portico of old St. Paul's Church could be seen across Covent Garden; and just around the corner in Russell Street were Will's and Tom's and Button's Coffee Houses, those "penny universities" where the wits of London met to talk politics and read the news and discuss the latest books and plays. Here over their morning coffee bowls, the young gentlemen in gay caps and parti-coloured gowns read the *Tatler* or the *Spectator*, propped up against the candle-sticks, and laughed at Mr. Steele's satires about their neighbour, Mr. Punch. And at home the ladies at their breakfast or their toilette looked up from their chocolate, or down from their mirrors, to smile at the accounts of the marionettes in St. James's Street or the Chinese Shadows at Philip Astley's amphitheatre or some new piece of impudence that Mr. Punch had perpetrated in his Covent Garden stage.

"If Punch grow extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely," wrote Addison to show how courageously he intended to criticize his contemporaries. Addison was an enthusiastic patron of the puppets. He had even written a Latin poem about them when he was at Oxford.

The puppets of course appeared in that list of subjects that Mr. Addison pretended he had lost at Lloyd's coffee



house, and the little actors were often mentioned in the *Spectator*, where

“Whate’er men do, or say, or think, or dream,  
Our motley paper seizes for its theme.”

In his most facetious vein, Mr. Steele wrote a letter that, he said, had arrived in that astonishingly large mail of his which furnished material for so many of his essays. The letter purported to come from the sexton of St. Paul’s Church. It was published in the *Spectator* of March 16, 1711.

“SIR,

“I Have been for twenty Years Under-Sexton of this Parish of St. Paul’s, Covent-Garden, and have not missed tolling in to Prayers six times in all those Years; which Office I have performed to my great Satisfaction, till this Fortnight last past, during which Time I find my Congregation take the Warning of my Bell, Morning and Evening, to go to a Puppett-show set forth by one Powell, under the Piazzas. By this Means, I have not only lost my two Customers, whom I used to place for six Pence a Piece over against Mrs. Rachel Eyebright, but Mrs. Rachel herself is gone thither also. There now appear among us none but a few ordinary People, who come to Church only to say their Prayers, so that I have no Work worth speaking of but on Sundays. I have placed my Son at the Piazzas, to acquaint the Ladies that the Bell rings for Church, and that it stands on the other side of the Garden; but they only laugh at the Child.

“I desire you would lay this before all the World, that I may not be made such a Tool for the Future, and that Punchinello may chuse Hours less canonical. As things are now, Mr. Powell has a full Congregation, while we have a very thin House, which if you can Remedy you will very much oblige.”



Mr. Powell, however, made such good use of his gate-receipts that Mr. Steele finally apologized for the Sexton's complaint, and wrote:

"MR. SPECTATOR,

"I am Sexton of the Parish of Covent-Garden, and complained to you some time ago, that as I was tolling in to Prayers at Eleven in the Morning, Crowds of People of Quality hastened to assemble at a Puppet-Show on the other Side of the Garden. I had at the same time a very great Disesteem for Mr. Powell and his little thoughtless Commonwealth, as if they had enticed the Gentry into those Wandrings: But let that be as it will, I now am convinced of the honest Intentions of the said Mr. Powell and Company; and send this to acquaint you, that he has given all the Profits which shall arise to-morrow Night by his Play to the use of the poor Charity-Children of this Parish. . . .

"I desire you would publish this voluntary Reparation which Mr. Powell does our Parish, for the Noise he has made in it by the constant rattling of Coaches, Drums, Trumpets, Triumphs and Battels. The Destruction of Troy adorned with Highland Dances, are to make up the Entertainment, . . . for no other Reason but that it is to do a good Action."

This time he signed the sexton's name, Ralph Bellfry.

Mr. Powell could well afford to give part of his profits to the poor, for all of London society frequented Punch's theatre as regularly as they went to the play in Drury Lane or the Haymarket, and Mr. Powell collected a shilling from every lace-ruffled, periwigged beau in the pit and two shillings for every one of the ladies whose stiff silks and panniers filled the boxes.

The actors must have been even more richly dressed than the fashionable people in the audience.

“Whoe’er on Powell’s dazzling stage display’d  
Hath famed King Pepin and his court survey’d,  
May guess, if old by modern things we trace,  
The pomp and splendour of the fairy race.”

Only with such a comparison as this could a contemporary poet describe the more than mortal elegance of King Oberon’s court in Kensington Garden.

The *Tatler* as well as the *Spectator* took advantage of the weakness of the London populace for Mr. Punch. Mr. Steele even tried to enliven the dreary controversy between Benjamin Hoadley, the opponent of authority in the Established Church, and Offspring Blackall, Bishop of Exeter, by introducing Punch in this strange company. He published a battle of words between Mr. Powell and the imaginary Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, in which he made Mr. Powell claim a divine right of authority over his own puppets, and Mr. Bickerstaff insist that Mr. Powell was nothing but “a little fellow” no bigger or more important than his own actors.

This was a cruel jest, for Mr. Powell was in truth a little fellow, a dwarf with a hunched back like Punch’s. However, it was good advertising for Mr. Powell and Mr. Punch, and undoubtedly they were indebted to Mr. Steele and his partner, Addison, for a great deal of their patronage, although Mr. Powell always advertised his puppet show well.

“I was the other Day at a Coffee-House,” wrote Defoe, “when the following advertisement was thrown in.—‘At Punch’s Theatre in the Little Piazza, Covent-Garden, this

present Evening will be performed an Entertainment, called, The History of Sir Richard Whittington, shewing his Rise from a Scullion to be Lord-Mayor of London, with the Comical Humours of Old Madge, the jolly Chamber-Maid."

This puppet play of Dick Whittington was said to be Mr. Powell's retort to the *Spectator's* humorous attacks on the realistic scenery in the Italian opera at the Haymarket. Mr. Addison objected to live sparrows and chaffinches taking the part of singing birds in Handel's *Rinaldo*. He said they were not so well trained as Mr. Powell's pig, who danced a charming minuet with Punch. He jokingly announced that there had been a plan afoot to make the story of Dick Whittington and his Cat into an opera "with real mice for actors; but Mr. Rich, the Proprietor of the Play-house, very prudently considered that it would be impossible for the cat to kill them all . . . for which Reason he would not permit it to be Acted in his House."

But the puppets had appeared in the story of Dick Whittington long before Mr. Powell's time. In 1668, Pepys wrote, "To Southwark Fair, very dirty, and thence saw the puppet-show of Whittington, which was pretty to see; and how that idle thing do work upon people that see it, and even myself too."

Usually whatever entertainment the public admired the little actors loved to imitate and caricature. When the Scottish lords were executed after the defeat of Prince Charlie's army, kilted puppets were decapitated at Mayfair, and the exhibition was continued for some years. After much humorous gesturing, with side remarks and

jokes, a puppet would lay his head on the edge of a shutter, whereupon another puppet, with many airy pleasantries, would chop off his head. It was undoubtedly from such episodes as this that Punch got the idea for his famous hanging lesson and his beheading scene, for in some plays he was sentenced to be guillotined. Often the doomed puppets were named after some political offender and carved and dressed to represent him. If the victim was an unpopular character his decapitation was, of course, a special pleasure to witness.

The puppets who lost their heads in Mayfair appeared in the first floor windows of the houses, above the sausage stalls and gaming tables that lined the crowded streets. There was so much law-breaking at Mayfair and there were so many foot-pads and drunken rioters, that the authorities were often obliged to close the entertainments. The *Tatler* of course laid all the blame on Mr. Punch, and Mr. Steele published an interview with Mrs. Saraband, the proprietress of a famous puppet show, on the subject of the banished jester's fate.

"She told me with a sigh," he reported, "that, despairing of ever reclaiming him, she would not offer to place him in a civil family, but got him in a post upon a stall in Wapping, where he may be seen from sun-rising to sun-setting, with a glass in one hand, and a pipe in the other, as sentry to a brandy-shop."

It must be admitted that Mr. Punch did not always behave as well as he might and there is no doubt that he often carried his jokes too far. But if the puppets were sometimes vulgar, so were the living actors and so were the audi-

ences whom they sought to please. "The drama's laws the drama's patrons make," and in every country and in all times actors have had to please their audiences in order to live.

The puppets' strong point was satire, or "satyr" as they still spelled it in the days of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Of course no one dreamed then that the little hump backed, hook nosed jester would some day take up the profession of journalism and point his jokes with a pen. It was not until 1841 that Punch joined the staff of the paper that carries his portrait and his name on its cover.

Punch used his satirical ability for more serious purposes than mere amusement. In Queen Anne's reign some fanatics called French Prophets used to assemble at Moorfields. The Ministry were not averse to religious persecution, but they were too wise to use force against this madness. So they ordered Mr. Powell to make Punch turn Prophet, and his ridicule soon put an end to the meetings.

One of Hogarth's drawings bewails the great popularity of Punch. It shows a large crowd thronging through a door where Mr. Punch is pointing to the sign, "Dr. Faustus is here," and a rag and paper woman is carting away the works of all the great dramatists in her wheelbarrow.

Mr. Powell's Punch was not the only puppet star who appeared in the Covent Garden playhouse. The showman, Penkethman, advertised his "Temple of the Heathen Gods, to be seen in the same House Where Punch's Opera is;" and as early as 1662 it was "a great resort of gallants." Pepys saw an Italian puppet play there and was so charmed that he went again with Mrs. Pepys. "Indeed it is very pleasant," he wrote. "Here among the fiddlers I first saw

a dulcimore played on with sticks knocking of the strings and is very pretty." And soon after that the little troupe from Covent Garden was invited to appear before King Charles at Whitehall.

The Covent Garden playhouse was not the only famous marionette theatre in London. The puppet theatres at Holborn Bridge and Fleet Street were very popular during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Provincials went to London just to see the puppet plays, while the puppet-shows at Iltham and Brentford were so famous that people flocked to them from London. The actor poet, Colley Cibber, established an elegant marionette theatre in St. James's Street, "the modish diversion of the time," according to Smollett, and there was another in St. Martin's Lane, where in 1710, Punch opened the social season with a "New Opera, given in honour of the four Iroquois Kings" who were brought to England to satisfy them that Queen Anne's realm was not really a small possession of France, as the Jesuit missionaries had told them. Punch helped to dispel the false idea with his "Incomparable entertainment," which was called "The Last Year's Campaign" and showed the famous victory at Malplaquet, where the Confederate Army under the command of the Duke of Marlborough overwhelmed the French. The play must have convinced the distinguished guests as to the true relationship between England and France. It contained also "Several Comic Entertainments of Punch in the Camp," given especially for the Entertainment of "The Emperor Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row and the Kings, Sa Ga Yean Qua Rah Tow, E Tow oh Koam, and Oh Nec Yeath Tow No Riow."



The Indian Kings lodged, very appropriately, in King Street in the vicinity of Punch's Covent Garden Theatre and they were the rage of the season, according to the *Spectator*.

Punch always followed the fads of society and so, when the World of Fashion flocked to the watering places, he went too. As early as the seventeenth century he made his way up Ludgate Hill to Savage's Inn, which was known as the Bell-Savage, and there under the famous sign of the bell and the hoop, he took the coach to Bath. The "Flying Machine" left every Monday, Wednesday and Friday and made a dash for the White Lion at Bath at the terrific speed of thirty five miles a day. Punch did not need to pay the pound and five shillings that the other passengers were charged, because his booth did not weigh more than fourteen pounds, and the showman was allowed to carry as much baggage as that with him for the regular fare.

Coaches also left the White Swan at Hollow Bridge, and the Three Cups in Bread Street and the Swan with the Two Necks in Ludlane, and in every one of them Punch sometimes jolted off to Bath and laughed at the dangers of the road. If the great wheels stuck in the mud or the coach turned over, Mr. Punch could entertain the passengers while their chariot was being righted. And as for highway robbers, neither Punch nor his master had much money to lose. What if a masked Claude Duval should step out from the trees at Hounslow Heath and point his pistols at their heads? He would meet a villain as reckless and daring as he was.

Arrived at Bath, Punch showed his play in that second



capital of English fashion and every puppet show worth mentioning was given for the entertainment of those who came to drink the waters or to watch the fashionable friends of Beau Nash. Mr. Powell was there, you may be sure, looking after his profits. The *Tatler* announced Punch's presence in a letter supposed to be written at White's Chocolate House. It said that the waiter, who was nicknamed Sir Thomas, showed some letters from "the Bath" which gave accounts of what passed among "the good company of that place."

"And coming from the Coffee House,  
It cannot but be true."

It was early in the season, the ninth of May, before the fashionable visitors had arrived, and only those who really needed the medicinal treatment of the waters were at Bath. The social leadership, which was usually held by some beauty of the day, was in the hands of two ambitious ladies, whom the writer of the letter called Prudentia and Florimel, and who "being both in the autumn of their life, took the opportunity of placing themselves at the head, before the Chloe's, Clarissa's and Pastorella's came down."

The rivalry between these two elderly ladies was so keen that when Florimel announced her patronage of the play of Alexander the Great, to be acted by a company of strollers, Prudentia advertised her intention of attending the puppet show of The Creation of the World.

"She had engaged everybody to be there; and, to turn our leader into ridicule, had secretly let them know, that

the puppet Eve was made the most like Florimel that ever was seen. On Thursday morning the puppet-drummer, Adam and Eve, and several others who lived before the flood, passed through the streets on horseback, to invite us all to the pastime, and the representation of such things as we all knew to be true; and Mr. Mayor was so wise as to prefer these innocent people, the puppets, who, he said, were to represent Christians, before the wicked players who were to show Alexander, an heathen philosopher. To be short, this Prudentia had so laid it, that, at ten of the clock, footmen were sent to take places at the puppet-show, and all we of Florimel's party were to be out of fashion, or desert her. We chose the latter. All the world crowded to Prudentia's house, because it was given out nobody could get in. When we came to Noah's flood in the show, Punch and his wife were introduced dancing in the ark. An honest plain friend of Florimel's, but a critic withal, rose up in the midst of the representation, and made many very good exceptions to the drama itself and told us that it was against all morality, as well as the rules of the stage, that Punch should be in jest in the deluge, or indeed that he should appear at all. This was certainly a just remark, and I thought to second him; but he was hissed by Prudentia's party: upon which, really, Sir Thomas, we, who were his friends, hissed him too. Old Mrs. Petulant desired both her daughters to mind the moral; then whispered Mrs. Mayoress, 'This is very proper for young people to see!' Punch, at the end of the play, made Prudentia a compliment, and was very civil to the whole company, making bows until his buttons touched the ground. All was carried triumphantly against

our party. In the mean time Florimel went to the tragedy, dressed as fine as hands could make her, in hopes to see Prudentia pine away with envy. Instead of that, she sat a full hour alone."

This puppet show of *The Old Creation of the World* "yet newly revived" was advertised at Bartholomew Fair and at Southwark Fair,

"With the addition of NOAH'S FLOOD; also several fountains playing water during the time of the play. The last scene does present Noah and his family coming out of the ark, with all the beasts two by two, and all the fowls of the air seen in a prospect sitting upon trees. . . . Likewise machines descending from above, double, with Dives rising out of hell, and Lazarus seen in Abraham's bosom, . . . with the merry conceits of SQUIRE PUNCH AND SIR JOHN SPENDALL."

It is said that when the puppet Noah had marshalled all his animals into the ark, bowing courteously to each couple as they entered, and was waiting hopefully for some sign of rain to appear, Mr. Punch popped out his head from behind the curtains of the stage and said sarcastically through his nose, "A hazy weather, Mr. Noah?"

Mr. and Mrs. Punch may have learned their manners from the Noah family. In the old Deluge play Mrs. Noah, whose name also was Joan, did not have any faith in her visionary husband's "crazy enterprise." She was persuaded to enter the ark much against her will by the combined efforts of her sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, all pushing and pulling her. When Noah jocosely bade her welcome in

the same courteous way he had greeted the beasts, he brought upon himself a well-deserved response.

"Have thou that for thy nott," said Mrs. Noah, and she hit him on the head as she said it.

"Ha, ha! Marry, this is hot," said poor old Noah, returning the blow. "It is good you be still."

Some of Punch's biographers say that he took his wife from the Deluge play and that Judy, or Joan, was Mrs. Noah before she married Punch. If Judy was the shrewish Joan, divorced from Noah, there may have been extenuating circumstances for her second husband's treatment of her. The old play-bills frequently advertised among "several diverting passages, Punch's Family Lecture, or Joan's Chimes on her Tongue."

## VI

### Wooden Saints and Martyrs

“Observe the audience is in pain  
While Punch is hid behind the scene;  
But, when they hear his rusty voice,  
With what impatience they rejoice!  
Should Faustus with the devil behind him  
Enter the stage, they never mind him.  
If Punch to stir their fancy shows  
In at the door his monstrous nose  
—You every moment think an age  
Till he appears upon the stage:  
—He gets a thousand thumps and kicks,  
Yet cannot leave his roguish tricks;  
—There’s not a puppet made of wood  
But what would hang him if they could;  
While, teasing all, by all he’s teased,  
How well are the spectators pleased!  
Have no concern for Sabra’s sake,  
Which gets the better, saint or snake,  
Provided Punch (for there’s the jest)  
Be soundly maul’d and plague the rest.”

From *A Dialogue between Mad Mullinix  
and Timothy*, by JONATHAN SWIFT.



## Wooden Saints and Martyrs

BUT how did such a reprobate as Mr. Punch ever come to be in such pious company as the patriarchs of the Old Testament? It was because at that time he did not confine his crimes and his jests to his own fireside. He had not yet become domesticated enough to have a play of his own. He was just a gay old bachelor, welcome in any place at any time and running in and out of any performance he chose to, interrupting the actors whenever he pleased and showing no respect for anybody's dignity. He even, so Mr. Addison tells us, sat on the Queen of Sheba's lap. The puppets who were Punch's neighbours appeared in plays that were founded on the Bible stories, so naturally Punch made friends with the people in them and you may be sure he added plenty of nonsense to the serious teaching of the religious plays.

"I remember when puppet-shows were made of good Scripture stories, as Jephthah's Rash Vow, and such good things, and when wicked people were carried away by the devil," said the landlady of the inn where Tom Jones saw the puppet-show. "There was some sense in those matters."

The puppets always appeared in the same plays that the human actors presented and their Biblical shows were merely imitations of the earliest dramas. These plays were religious because they began in the church. This was in the

time when the Bible had not yet been printed, and when, even if it had been, few people could have read it. All religious instruction was received in the churches, and as the services were recited in Latin, the priests acted out the gospel stories, for not many people were learned enough to understand that language. At the Christmas mass they made a play to show the story of the birth of Christ; at Easter, they acted the Last Supper, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection; and the other gospel stories were played on the special days set aside in their honour.

In the Christmas play the priests took their places in different parts of the church, which they called stations, and waited for their turn to show a scene from the Nativity story. A chorister began the play; advancing to the edge of the Choir gallery, he stood in his long white robes, with outspread wings, and told the joyous news of Christ's birth to the shepherds who kept watch over their flocks below. The priests who took the part of the shepherds dropped their crooks in astonishment and one wrapped his mantle about the lamb in his arms to protect it; but when the angel said, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy," they ceased to tremble and stood reverently listening to the announcement of the glad tidings. Then from the galleries all around came a song of praise from the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The shepherds walked up to the altar, while the congregation made an aisle for them. They knelt in adoration before the manger and then returned singing to their station, where they stood apart watching the other episodes in the play.

Now from the eastern door of the church came the three Kings, the white-bearded Melchior, the dark-visaged Balthazar, and Caspar, or Gaspar, the youthful one. They followed a moving light which represented the Christmas Star. King Herod sat at his station on a high throne. He was surrounded by his courtiers, who were really the officials of the church. Herod was troubled at the appearance of the Kings and sent a messenger to ask who they were. When the envoy returned with the tidings of the birth of the Redeemer, Herod consulted the chief priests and scribes, who searched the Scriptures and announced that it was written by the prophet that Christ should be born in Bethlehem of Judea. At this news, King Herod flew into a rage and knocked the Sacred Books out of the scribes' hands and raved so violently that to "out Herod Herod" has meant ever since to overdo everything.

After his son had pacified him, King Herod sent the Messenger to bid them "go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship also." The Kings advanced to the altar, and the star went before them until it stood over the place where the manger was. When they had laid their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh at the foot of the altar, the Angel who had first greeted the Shepherds spoke to them and directed them not to return to Herod but to depart into their own country another way; so the Wise Men made their way through the throngs of spectators to the western door of the church.

Herod showed that he did not see their going by sitting still and looking the other way. But the Messenger told

him that the Wise Men had mocked him. So Herod was very wroth and he drew his sword and handed it to a soldier and bade him send forth and slay all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the realm.

These three scenes, the play of the Shepherds, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Wrath of Herod, were the beginning of the mystery plays, in which the whole life of Christ was shown.

Some of the Old Testament stories were made into plays to show the prophecies of the Saviour's coming and the shows were so successful that more and more scenes were added until finally there was a whole cycle of plays beginning with the Creation of the World and ending with the Last Judgment. As the plays grew longer and more elaborate, they outgrew the space in the crowded churches and were moved out into the porches and finally to the churchyards, and the townspeople were allowed to take some of the parts. Soon after the Norman Conquest the actors spoke their lines in Norman French, but when the workingmen and the common people became interested in the miracle plays, they gave the stories in English.

The puppets also presented the Bible stories in the churches. They showed the scene of the Nativity in little tableaux like the Christmas Cribs. The Holy Family was seen resting in the grotto of Bethlehem, the ragged shepherds kneeling at one side and the richly dressed kings offering their gifts on the other. The chief character in these little groups of dolls gave her name to all puppets and they have ever since been called marionettes, that is little Marys. Finally the tableaux came to life, and the dolls told the



When they first moved, the puppet mystery drama began.



Bible stories in pantomime. When they first moved, the puppet mystery drama began. In the early days of these plays, the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, the puppets usually acted their part in dumb-show, while some one recited a Bible story or legendary poem. One of these performances was described in the sixteenth century by Lombarde in his *Topographical Dictionary*.

"In the Dayes of ceremonial religion, they used at Wytney (in Oxfordshire) to set forthe yearly in manner of a Shew, or Interlude, the Resurrection of our Lord. . . . For the which purpose and the more lyvely thereby to exhibite to the Eye the hole Action of the Resurrection, the Priestes garnished out certaine smalle puppets, representing the Parsons of Christe, the Watchmen, Marie, and others; amongst the which, one bare the Parte of a wakinge Watchman who (espine Christe to arise) made a continual Noyce, like to the sound that is made by the Metinge of two Styckes and was thereof commonly called Jack Snacker of Wytney. The like Toye I my selfe (being then a childe) once saw in Poules Church in London, at a Feast of Whitsuntyde, whence the coming downe of the Holy Gost was set forthe by a white Pigion that was let to fly out of a Hole, and that is yet to be sene in the mydst of the Roofe of the great Ile."

Long after the plays given by the priests had left the sanctuaries, the puppets continued to act the Bible stories in the churches. But with the growth of the Protestant belief, the images had to go, and so the Christmas Crib left the church, like its forerunner, the mystery play. Both the tableaux called raree, or rarity, shows and the "motions," or moving puppets, immediately took to the road and sought out the country fairs.



The fairs too had been expelled from the churchyards. They had begun under the auspices of the priests and helped to fill the coffers of the church and of the tradesmen, who could not resist taking advantage of the great crowds that came to the religious plays by holding a market at the same time.

When the church gave up its control of the dramas in which laymen were now acting, the priests yielded the direction of the plays to the town guilds. Each guild took the scenes for which it was best prepared to make the properties, for in the days when there was no painted scenery, stage properties were of great importance. The Bakers presented the Last Supper; and the Butchers, the Crucifixion; the Tanners showed the Fall of Lucifer; and the Tailors gave the scene in the Garden of Eden. The cross and the crown of thorns and the gifts of the Magi were made by the Jewellers, while the Shipwrights built the ark. The guilds, which were very wealthy, vied with each other to see who could present the most successful scenes and spared no expense for actors and costumes. The great time for the English miracle plays was Corpus Christi Day; but each craft had a guardian saint, and what was more natural than that the guild should present the life of its patron on the saint's day?

The Saint George play was a survival of a Saint's play called "The Holy Martyr Saint George." This play was so loved by English boys that they always gave it when they went about the neighbourhood dressed as mummers at Christmas time. Mumming means "masking" and the boys' masks were very funny indeed and so were their home-

made costumes and their homely interpretation of the old miracle play. The Doctor who died of the physic he tried to give Punch was in this play too. He brought the Turkish Knight and the Dragon back to life so that Saint George could kill them again. In those days he administered a medicine called Hocum-Slocum-ali-campan, which evidently had more curative power than the fatal stick liquorice.

Punch had met the patron saint of England early in his career. In a Bartholomew Fair Bill in the time of James the Second, a play called *St. George for England* was advertised, in which the Saint slew the venomous Dragon, "with such curiosity that his very intrails turned into snakes and sarpints," given "With the Merry Conceits of Pickle-Herring and his son, Punch."

Dramas about the lives of saints were the only plays called miracles in France, where the plays about the Saviour were called mystery plays. In Protestant England the mysteries were much more popular than most of the miracles; but both kinds of dramas were called miracles by the English people, who always came in crowds to see the plays. They waited outside the church, or beside the cross in the village square, until the Corpus Christi procession arrived. The audiences usually stood to see the earlier religious plays just as they stood in the courtyard of the inns or the unroofed theatre of Elizabethan times to see Shakespeare's plays and as they stood before Punch's booth at the fairs in the eighteenth century.

In the larger towns the guilds acted their scenes on pageants, movable stages that followed the Corpus Christi procession through the streets and stopped before the stands

where the audience waited. But in the country districts the players used scaffold stages built at the cross roads, and the crowd followed the procession from station to station. The English stages were usually built in tiers, with Heaven above, the Earth below, and underneath that the fires of Hell. Sometimes the stations were all on the same platform, as they were in the French mystery plays, with Hell-mouth at the right and Heaven at the left—that is, the audience's left, for of course the actors must turn to the right to find Heaven. It was the free English way of staging plays that made it easy for the later audiences to follow the story of a play as it wandered from one country to another and that opened the door for the roving imagination of Shakespeare. But the French system of stagecraft led directly to the farce form, for when Egypt and Syria, Heaven and Hell were all shown jostling each other, it created a very ridiculous effect indeed, especially if the plays were intended to be serious.

The entrance to Hell always looked like the head of the Dragon in the Saint George play. Fire and smoke poured from the great jaws, and black imps ran in and out of the flames, a terror to the hearts of all evil-doers.

Heaven was not so interesting but its inhabitants were much more splendid. The actor who took the part of God wore a gilded wig and gilded his face. He leaned over the railing of Heaven when he spoke to the people on Earth. The angels came down a ladder from Heaven and mixed in the affairs of men on the middle stage, which represented this world. The saved souls were always dressed in white, but the lost souls were gay in black and yellow, while the

ruler of the underworld wore a black leather dress, shaggy with feathers or horsehair, and he had horns and a tail and cloven feet; he wore a mask too and carried an active club. He and his assistant imps jumped down into the audience and played pranks on every one they could. It was in the miracle plays that Punch met the Horrid, Dreadful Personage, who behaved so badly then that Punch lost all respect for his wrath.

Wooden saints and devils often tussled with each other, for the puppets of course were busily imitating the miracle players, and Mr. Punch gained a great deal from the religious plays. He probably copied his cruel treatment of his infant child from the mystery of the Massacre of the Innocents. Some historians claim that Mrs. Judy got her name from Judas, and that Punch himself is descended from Pontius Pilate, who was always a clown in the mystery plays.

With the growth of the Protestant belief, the religious shows, or "shewes" as they were called in those days, developed into the morality plays, and the puppet players were not slow to adopt the idea of these travelling sermons. They whittled out fresh actors, or re-named their old ones with such titles as Pride, or Vanity, or Humility, or Perverse Doctrine, who represented the sin of dissenting from the orthodox faith. In the moralities the characters were not real people but abstract qualities like Truth and Falsehood, or Gluttony, Intemperance, and Riotous Living. The plays showed the struggle between the powers of good and evil for the possession of Man's soul. They usually began with a long prologue spoken by the same messenger who carried the bad tidings to King Herod. He told the audience all

about the play before it had even begun and recited a dreary epilogue at the end, in which a stern moral was clearly pointed and the consequences of evil-doing were all very carefully explained.

If the Punch and Judy show were a morality play, Mr. Punch would have been named for some vice. Judy would be Righteous Indignation and the baby, Injured Innocence. The Policeman would be called Authority and the Hangman, Punishment; Joey's name would be Friendship; the Doctor's, Physic; and Toby's, Faithfulness; while the servant who objected to Punch's music would be named Convention. Now suppose that Punch, or Vice as he would now be called, had murdered Innocence, been beaten by Righteous Indignation and healed by Physic; had betrayed Friendship, been bitten by Faithfulness in the person of Toby; had outraged Convention and been arrested by Authority, hanged by Punishment and carried off by the Devil to Hell, the play would certainly have lost its Punch in more ways than one.

Some authorities think that Mr. Punch's show is really a morality play, in which evil conquers until the end, when mankind triumphs over the Devil, and that Mr. Punch was once the Vice in the religious plays. He certainly behaved very like the Vices, but of course he was only mocking them and just pretended religion to keep his place as an actor during the time when there was no other drama than the Bible plays.

The Vices tried to make the morality plays lively enough to interest the audience by all the antics they could think of. Old Vice, or old Iniquity, with the accent on the Nick,

belaboured all the Virtues with his lath sword, and the plays often degenerated into a noisy fracas between good and evil. Of course Virtue always triumphed and kicked Vice down the fiery entrance to the lower world, where the Vice even teased the Devil himself. But at the end of the play he was always carried off on the Devil's back, bawling for help through the mouth of the great fool's head he wore and beating the Devil's shoulders with the balloon he carried on a stick. Soon the plays became so boisterous that the clergy disapproved of them. But when the tomfoolery was left out, the moralities were so dull that people did not care for them.

Of course no one could object to the rude pranks of the wooden actors who copied the religious plays, and the puppets never made the mistake of preaching to their patrons. History tells of one showman whose conscience would not permit him to let Punch escape from the consequences of his crimes, and who allowed the Evil One to carry off the hero. But the misguided man was pelted with stones by the outraged audience.

When the great change in the English drama which followed the moralities provided the puppets with other plays for their repertories, the public never deserted the wooden patriarchs and saints, so the showmen merely transferred them to the new plays and introduced some of the characters from the worldly masks and interludes into their old plays too.

The new puppet characters were miniature copies of the legendary heroes in the English songs and ballads. These rôles were played by human actors too, both professional



and amateur, in the continuous religious festivals that were celebrated from Easter week to St. John's Eve at Midsummer. When the Reformation banished these popular characters from churchly society, they took refuge in the loyal hearts of the country people, who paid honour to them in the May Day festivals, which no reproof or ban could ever quite suppress. They always led the procession when the Maypole was brought in, and all the rest of the year their wooden counterparts imitated them on the little stages.

First came the woodmen in buff-leather jerkins. Their axes that had hewed down the Maypole were trimmed with garlands of ivy and sprigs of hawthorn. Their partners were pretty blue-kirtled milk-maids, who led a sleek cow, its horns gold-tipped and hung with garlands of gay-coloured ribbons. After them Robin Hood headed his jolly green-clad outlaws. His bow and arrows and his silver bugle were wound with rose-buds. At his right walked his good friend, Little John, at his left, handsome Will Scarlet, and behind him Maid Marian in her sky-blue tunic and "flower-besprent" kirtle, "slaying hearts with her glances as she slew harts with her arrows." Six maidens in orange and white strewed flowers along her path and trailed garlands of violets and cowslips after her. Friar Tuck cleared the way for the oxen and cart that bore the Maypole. He let his quarter-staff fall on the toes of any onlookers who pushed too far forward, and when they exclaimed with pain, he piously advised them to say prayers instead of curses. And Much, the Miller's Son, added insult to injury by hitting the bystanders with his inflated balloon.



Tom, the Piper's Son, furnished the music with his fife or tabor, and the hobby-horse and the dragon brought up the rear with the morris dancers, jingling the bells on their high hats and pointed shoes.

The morris dance was really the Spanish Moorish dance. In the sixteenth century it was combined with the English Robin Hood dances and all the May Day characters appeared in it; but in the earlier days it was always given by boys who represented the Seven Champions of Christendom and the Moorish knight. It may have been the wicked pagans in the old Saint George Play who introduced the morris dance into England.

Saint George's day too was celebrated with a grand procession, which was kept up in Warwickshire long after the miracle plays were suppressed. The lad who represented the slayer of the dragon rode proudly on his horse Bucephalus, and a great white plume floated from his white helmet. Sabra, who was always the prettiest girl in the county, led the captive Dragon, who champed his huge jaws and waddled sideways whenever the two boys inside him fell out of step.

Shakespeare must have seen the riding of Saint George on his birthday, as the procession wound under the willows beside the Avon or along the beautiful road from Coventry to Stratford, for St. George's day was the twenty-third of April. Saint George too lived in leafy Warwickshire. According to the old ballads he was born and died in the town of Coventry, and certainly there were many who could bear witness to actually seeing those events when the miracle

plays were given in the market-place of Coventry, for the plays of Coventry, Chester and York were so famous that people came from all parts of England to see them.

The Dragon of the Saint George play was a well-known animal in Merrie England. He was supposed to be the emblem of sin or of paganism, which was always destroyed by some saint. The puppet play of Bel and the Dragon, which was taken from the legend of Daniel destroying Heathenism, was a popular motion. A life-sized dragon appeared in nearly all the English pageants and festivals. Sometimes he was a huge puppet that moved its great jaws as its bearers pulled the strings. Such a creature was carried in the ancient processions that perambulated the boundaries of the parish during the Festival of Rogations. Sometimes he was represented by a village lad, like Snap, the famous Norwich dragon, who always went glittering in green and gold with the Mayor and corporation in the procession of St. John the Baptist. He was guarded by four "whifflers" carrying drawn swords and banners. Snap was a witty beast and joked with every one in the procession and with the spectators too. When the celebrants entered the cathedral, Snap sat outside on "the dragon's stone" until the service was over and he could rejoin the other officials of the town.

Mr. Punch saw all the heroes in the festivals and dances and imitated every one he liked until he had picked up a good deal of fun and adventure for his own play. He took a scene here and there and a situation or two from every spectacle he saw and added it to his play. The actors he could not imitate, Punch hired for his own stage. Many

of his company were from Italy, among them Scaramouch, and the stuttering Constable, and the Doctor who was so anxious for his fee. There! The secret is out! Punch too was a foreigner who came from Italy. Though he seemed so much like an Englishman, he was only making fun of his neighbours by mimicking them.

It was long after his arrival in England that "Signor Punchinello" shortened his name to Punch and became thoroughly Anglicized. In the overseer's books of St. Martin's Church there is an entry, made in 1666 and 1667, of money paid by "Punchinello, ye Italian popet-player for his Booth at Charing Cross." Pepys saw him three times that summer at Moorfields acting under the name of Polichinello.

Just when he came, no one knows. The puppets have an ancient lineage in England. In the twelfth century English boys played with toy knights that brandished their swords at the jerk of a string, and the puppets enlivened the waits between the jousts at the tournaments and amused the households of the nobles before Punch was even heard of in England. Almost all the English writers from Chaucer to Byron have mentioned the little actors, some of them not very respectfully.

The poets had good reason to be resentful at the proprietors of the wooden actors, for in the great days of the drama the puppets invoked the tragic muse and stole all the dramatists' best plays. Many a poet whose play had not been a popular success saw the puppets burlesque his characters and heard them distort his splendid lines to crowded houses, and there was naturally ill feeling against

the puppet showmen among the dramatists, who took their revenge in poking fun at the little actors. Ben Jonson was the most venomous of the puppets' critics. It was in his time, probably, that Punch arrived in England, in the days when Italian actors were travelling all over Europe and scholars from England were visiting Italy to study the fine arts. The little wooden company brought many Italian tales with them, stories such as Shakespeare wove into some of his plays, like the *Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

This Italian puppet saw the great English drama that grew from the rude mystery plays and pale moralities and flowered in the Elizabethan age. He took a small part in all the puppet-plays and patiently served his apprenticeship as an understudy to the English actors and dramatists. He watched the plays of Shakespeare develop from the comedies and chronicle-plays to the tragedies, and he took careful note of the crimes of his fellow hunch-back, King Richard the Third. He was waiting for his cue to take the front of the stage in England, where he was destined to become the most famous puppet in the world.

## VII

### The Ancestry of Punchinello

“The gods of old were logs of wood,  
And worship was to puppets paid;  
In antic dress the idol stood,  
And priest and people bow’d the head.

“No wonder then, if art began  
The simple votaries to frame,  
To shape in timber foolish man,  
And consecrate the block to fame.

“What Momus was of old to Jove,  
The same a Harlequin is now;  
The former was buffoon above,  
The latter is a Punch below.”

From Jonathan Swift’s *The Puppet Show*.

## The Ancestry of Punchinello

IN Italy Punch was called Pulcinella. He had the same quarrelsome disposition that he exhibited in England, amiable only when he was victorious, and pretending to be stupid in order to dupe his opponents. He had the same hooked-down nose and hooked-up chin and the same easy conscience. The puppets in Italy, as in England, appeared in the rôles that the human players acted, and Pulcinella was a character of the living stage, played by many a famous actor. He was born and brought up in Naples, but his fame soon outgrew his native city and he became one of the most celebrated actors in all Italy.

In his birthplace this Pulcinella was a star; he always appeared as the chief buffoon of the Neapolitan plays. He loved to show off his prowess before his neighbours, eating great mounds of macaroni and pulling it out to the full length of his arms as if it were a huge piece of gum. He took the part of a servant or a master, a thief or a magistrate, a soldier or a poet, just as it happened. He mumbled his speeches in the Neapolitan fashion, chopping off the ends of all his words in the same way his English cousin shortened his name from Punchinello to Punch.

Pulcinella was not tied to any woman's apron strings. He always explained that he was a bachelor because he was not handsome enough to attract the ladies. They could



not appreciate his beauty, although he was the Apollo of deformed men, and he had not enough money to make them like him in spite of his looks, so he said.

One of his most popular rôles in Naples was the part of The Brigand Chief. In this play, the robber chief, Pulcinella, went to visit the miller, when he knew that the master of the house had gone to mass, and commanded the miller's wife to give him the family purse.

But the miller's wife was equal to the occasion. "Certainly I will give it to you," she said. "Come with me and I will show you where the gold is kept." Pulcinella followed her up the stairs and rudely strode past her into the upper room, while his hostess politely held the door open for him, and then she locked him in.

When Pulcinella found himself a prisoner he made a great to-do and cried out so loudly that one of his men, who was hiding near by, heard the uproar and rushed to the aid of his chief; but he found that the miller's wife had barred all the doors and windows. The robber tried to enter by slipping down the mill-wheel. He stuck his head through the wall where the axle of the wheel entered; but before he could crawl into the room, the clever woman set the wheel in motion and put an end to the rescue and to the bandit too.

Meanwhile Pulcinella had found a hammer upstairs and was smashing a hole through the floor and the ceiling below. Just as he was about to drop through into the room downstairs, the miller returned, bringing a detachment of carabinieri home with him from mass. They rushed up the stairs after the robber-chief, with their guns over their

shoulders, and never noticed that his feet were sticking through the ceiling.

The next moment Pulcinella dropped through the hole and escaped by an outside stairway to the roof, with the miller, the miller's wife, the soldier, and the neighbours all after him. But when the pursuers peered over the eaves, the brigand was nowhere to be seen. There was nothing on the housetop but a weather vane with outspread arms turning merrily in the wind. When Pulcinella's enemies aimed at that, the wrought iron figure came to life and jumped to a balcony. From there he leaped into a garden and stood in the corner pretending he was a white pillar. Up this pillar one of his pursuers climbed to look into a window, but the pillar ran away and left him sprawling on the ground.

When his foes were close upon him and there was no other way of escape, Pulcinella hid under a winnowing basket in the garden and crawled away with the basket over him. But of course he was caught. The captain of the company tried him and sentenced him to be hanged.

Arrived at the gallows, Pulcinella pretended stupidity and disposed of the hangman, just as the English Punch did in his famous scene, by letting him have his own rope and allowing him to hang himself.

How Pulcinella happened to go on the stage is explained by an old Neapolitan legend. It seems that hundreds of years ago a company of strolling players came to Acerra, near the city of Naples, in the vintage time, when all the country people were celebrating the grape harvest according to the time honoured custom of the place. It was the

rule to require strangers who entered the town at that merry time to meet all the villagers' jests with a witty retort. If the visitors were at a loss for an answer or if they laughed at their hosts' sallies, they were required to pay a fine to the rustic jesters. So these actors were immediately surrounded by the village boys, all looking very comical indeed with wreaths of vine on their heads and their faces daubed with wine-lees. The country revellers tried with songs and jokes to outwit the actors, but the comedians, being professional jest-makers, were more than a match for the rustic amateurs and would easily have won the contest, had it not been that one of the vintagers, a humped-back fellow with a huge nose, whose name was Puccio d'Aniello, or Puccio, the son of Aniello, said such droll things and had such a funny great nose that even the actors, schooled as they were to control their facial expression, could not keep from laughing at him and were beaten in the battle of wit.

The actors, having no money to pay their fine, were driven out of town, but they decided that a jester who could make people laugh in spite of themselves would be a good man to have in their company. So they went back and persuaded Puccio d'Aniello to join them. The arrangement proved to be profitable, for wherever the company acted Puccio d'Aniello drew crowded houses.

After some years this buffoon from Acerra died, and his place was taken by an actor who was in every way as funny as the first Punch except that he did not have Puccio's monstrous nose. That feature he provided by attaching a great nose to the mask which covered the upper part of his face, for the actors then had not gotten over the habit of wear-

ing masks to hide their real feelings, though their masks in Italy were much smaller than the ones they had worn in the vast open theatres of Greece. The new jester also took the name Puccio d'Aniello, which the smoothing iron of Neapolitan pronunciation changed to Pulcinella.

In every town that the Neapolitan Punch visited he inspired some other actor to imitate him and soon Italy was full of chicken-beaked, hunch-backed fellows who aspired to act the part of Pulcinella. As soon as one Pulcinella retired, another was ready to step into his place and that was how Pulcinella became immortal. It was no wonder the Italians believed their hump-backed clown would live forever. Each Pulcinella had the same face as the one before him, and, the legend says, it must have been the same Pulcinella returned to life, for certainly there was never more than one person in the world with such a nose as that.

But early in the eighteenth century antiquarians excavating near Herculaneum found a little statue of an actor with a nose just like Pulcinella's, and a nut cracker chin like his, and two humps and a fat stomach. It is supposed to be a portrait of Maccus, one of the Roman mimes. The mimes were mimics, who were fond of making fun of every one and especially of caricaturing other actors' plays. They even attempted tragedy and turned it to farce with their nonsense. Maccus was one of the Atellan players, a company of actors who came from their native town of Atella and went about giving their comic plays on high wooden trestles. Atella was in the neighbourhood of Herculaneum and Pompeii, where Maccus' portraits were found, and not far from Naples, the headquarters of Pulcinella. Maccus

spoke the Oscan dialect, the language of the neighbourhood where Pulcinella learned his dialect, and he may have been the great-great-grandfather of Mister Punch.

This ancient jester was witty and insolent. He could not endure to be contradicted and his chief argument was a cudgel; first he knocked his opponents down and then he reasoned with them. He loved to imitate the cries of birds, especially the cackle of a hen, with his pivetta. This was a little whistle that the Atellan players used when they caricatured the metallic sound of the tragic actors' voices speaking through their great masks. The Punch and Judy showman still cries Punch's Root-to-too-it through a mouthpiece like the whistle Maccus used in Rome.

Pulcinella may have been named for this cackling cry. Some learned writers say his name comes from the Italian name for a little chicken and others say it means a little person with a chicken nose. There are those, and they are learned too, who contend that he was named, like Tom Thumb, because he was a little fellow, as pollice is the Latin word for thumb. But while the puppet Pulcinella was of course a tiny chap, there is no reason to believe that the live one was smaller than his companions in the Italian plays. Children think that the English Punch was named for the blows he gave to every one who came near him and received so cheerfully; and that is as good a theory as many that have been advanced; but probably the chicken story is the most authentic account of Pulcinella's christening.

Certainly the Neapolitan clown never appeared without the monstrous nose on his mask, though not all Pulcinellas were endowed with the nut-cracker chins and humps of the

first Punch. It was not convenient to wear artificial chins and humps or easy to keep them in place. But the nose was easily put on with a domino mask. Of course the wooden Pulcinellas could readily be endowed by their makers with all the charms of the original and so they were all made in the image of the merry Neapolitan clown, double humps, nut-cracker chin, chicken-beak nose and all, and the puppet Pulcinella wore all of these wherever he went, even after he had journeyed to England and changed the family name to Punchinello.

But there was one great difference between Pulcinella of Italy and the little villain of the English stage. The chief Italian puppets were elaborately jointed marionettes pulled by strings, so the Italian Pulcinella was a more versatile performer than the little bustling Englishman with the showman's hand thrust under his coat. Pulcinella had, besides the head and arms and the stick with which the English Punch made so free, the complete use of his legs and he could kick his foes as well as beat them. He could dance more gracefully too than the bobbing English puppet, although he was never so agile a dancer as Harlequin.

Pulcinella danced as a marionette in all the Italian cities and he was also a member of every little company that set out to play along the highways of Italy. These travelling puppet troupes were not so delicately made or so elegantly dressed as the fashionable doll actors of the towns. Although they were sometimes marionettes pulled by strings, sometimes they were puppets worked from below like the Punch and Judy actors.

But in whatever form they travelled, patronage was al-



ways good. Puppets were the favourite amusements of the Italian children. They followed the showmen about the streets and lanes to see the dolls act in the box-stage which served as the puppets' sleeping car. Their elders who patronized the stationary theatres in the towns were no less interested. Noblemen had puppet stages in their homes and employed a puppet showman as one of their retinue. When Lucrezia Borgia was married to Don Alfonso d'Este, among the many entertainments given for her delight was a grand ballet performed by dolls at Bologna.

Before select audiences the marionettes indulged in bold jests about persons of importance. Sometimes prominent citizens were featured in the plays and their airs and manners were caricatured by the puppets, while their exact tone of voice and tricks of speech were imitated by the spokesmen behind the scenes. Daring opinions on political questions found a voice in the puppet plays and cutting jokes were levelled at the government and fully appreciated by the keen-witted audience.

Satirical plays were especially popular in Rome; but at Milan and Genoa spectacular performances were the favourites. Operas were given in the puppet stage with well-known singers behind the scenes. Rossini's masterpieces played by the wooden actors were especially popular in the nineteenth century and the puppets also appeared in the operas of Bellini and Verdi.

There is an amusing picture of an Italian eighteenth-century puppet play in Vernon Lee's story of "Sister Benvenuto and the Christ Child."



"It was the story of Judith; how she slew Holophernes and delivered her people, written in Alexandrine verses by our Reverend Father Confessor. The head of Holophernes really came off, and quantities of red Berlin wool out of it, most naturally and terribly. There was a Triumph of Judith, dressed like the Parisian fashion doll near the Clock Tower in Venice; with a gold car, a transparency, and Time appearing with his scythe and Religion out of clouds, to sing a compliment to our Reverend Mother Abbess and the illustrious house of Morosini—and there was a dance of Turks, very elegant, and a most diverting scene after Holophernes' death between the servant wench of Judith and Harlequin his valet. The puppets were like alive, hitting the floor with their feet, snapping through the middle when they bowed, and striking out their arms and letting down their jaws with a click in the most life-like way, and talking in wonderful voices ilke bagpipes and Jews'-harps. . . .

"The showman was an ill-favoured person, with a Bolognese accent, a cast in his eye, a red wig, and his stockings badly drawn. . . .

"There was an immense company present of noble ladies and cavaliers, and prelates and monks, and officers, and His Excellency the Proveditor of the Republic, and the Head Spy, and ices and sherbet and chocolate, and card-tables set out later for the nobility, and at least one thousand waxlights in the Murano chandeliers, usually kept for the sepulchres on Maundy Thursday. And when it was over there was a free fight between the chair-carriers of the Patriarch's niece and the Bravoes of His Excellency the Count of Gradisca, and a man was left for dead, and the police put a cobbler on the rack next day in order to obtain information and do justice."

Marionettes have been prominent so long in Italy that they are an accepted part of Italian life. One of the favourite children's stories is the tale of a puppet, Pinoc-

chio, a wooden boy who could not be real until he had done a kind deed. The story of Pinocchio's search for his soul has been translated into English and it bids fair to be as popular with the children in America as it is in Italy.

For a puppet to come to life and find his wooden heart beating does not seem at all strange, even to grown people, in Italy, where puppets are regarded with as much respect and love as any people; and as actors, many Italians still prefer the marionettes to the real players. In the eighteenth century it was not at all unusual for the critics to discuss the puppet-shows as seriously as our present-day theatre-goers converse about the latest successful play.

So much more important are the little actors in Italy than elsewhere that there are six words for them in Italian, while the English language has only two names for the doll-actors. The cloth puppets were called *burattini*, after a famous comedian, and the Italians gave a name very like it to a rabble, because of the crowds that gathered to see the cheap puppet shows. A rag actor was called a *bambola*. The puppets are also called *bamboccini*. A *bamboccie* is a large fat child or a very simple person, so the stuffed cloth puppets are called little large fat children or little simple persons. *Fantoccini* was the name that the Italian marionettes took with them when they set out to tour Western Europe. The *fantoccini* were made of cloth and wood. They were usually much larger than the other puppets and their anatomy was so complicated that more than one person was needed to inspire the gestures and movements which gave life to the actors. The old name

for a puppet is pupazzo and the Italian word for marionette is marionetta.

The Venetians claim that the marionettes were named for the figures carried in the procession at their annual Feast of the Virgins, in which the rescue of twelve Venetian brides from pirates of Trieste was celebrated in a festival. Twelve of the prettiest girls in Venice were chosen each year to impersonate the heroines of the adventure. They were dressed richly for the procession and loaded with jewelry. When the feast was over, the lucky maidens were allowed to keep their finery for a dower and they were married at the public expense.

One year when the exchequer was low, only three brides were chosen and later the thrifty state economized by saving the costumes and jewels from year to year. After that large wooden puppets, dressed to represent the captured brides, were carried in the procession, perhaps because Venetian girls were not willing to take a public part in the festivities without pay. For these wooden virgins, all hard-featured or clumsy girls were nicknamed "Wooden Marys," and the Venetians say that the puppets, who were also little wooden-faced maidens, were called marionettes because they were little Marys like the figures in the procession.

But there were little wooden Marys in Italy long before the twelve wooden virgins superseded the Venetian maidens. The doll-actors appeared in the Italian churches before they travelled to other countries, and puppets were an old story in Rome before the days of Maccus. They were as popular as they were familiar. Cicero, Ovid, Livy, Horace, and Marcus Aurelius compared men to puppets

pulled by strings, so the little figures must have been well known to them; and in the catacombs jointed dolls have been found with controlling wires, the ancestors of the moving images in the Christian churches.

The Greek priests too pulled strings to manipulate the statues of the pagan gods. Sometimes the statues moved in other mysterious ways, which Heron explained in a treatise on automatic figures. Puppets were well known in Greece in the time of Euripides; Plato compared man to a doll and his passions to the cords which caused its movements and actions; Aristotle described "puppets made of wood, moved by strings;" and Pindar also alluded to the little stringed figures.

The fact that the wise men of ancient times exhorted their readers not to be like puppets is nothing against the little wooden actors. The philosophers were advising their fellow puppets not to follow the jerking of their strings when others like themselves pulled them. The puppets are only obedient to the will of a superior being.

"The folly of men is an inexhaustible fund of riches, and I am always sure of filling my purse by exhibiting a few pieces of wood," said a Sicilian showman at the banquet of Callias which Xenophon described. Socrates had requested each guest to tell of what he was proudest, and afterwards the diners fell to joking and asked the same question of the jester Phillipus and the Syracusan showman.

"Why, of the silly fools who come and see my puppets," said the showman, "I live on them."

"Ah, yes," said Phillipus, "and that explains why the other day I heard you praying the gods to grant great store

of corn and wine and of fruits abundance, but of wits a famine."

The puppets to which the Syracusan referred were really children. They were dancers, whom he called his puppets because they were trained so perfectly, but the dancing master may have been a director of wooden actors too, for the



puppet show was an ancient art in Sicily as well as in Italy and Greece.

There are Greek marionettes still in existence, made of baked earth with jointed arms and legs. In ancient Greece puppet showmen wandered about from village to town, with fortune tellers, menageries, jugglers, and tricksters of all sorts.

In those days the puppet actors were not so different from the live actors as they are now, except in size. Players in the great amphitheatres were forced to wear huge

masks with mouths like megaphones so their voices could be heard in the vast arena. In order to seem tall enough for the huge masked heads, the actors strode about in high buskins, and to lengthen their arms in proportion to their height, they wore artificial hands, so their gestures were as stiff as those of the puppets. When low finances would not permit the managers to hire many actors, life-sized wooden figures were used to fill up the ranks of the chorus.

When the early Christian church pronounced theatrical performances wicked, the puppet-shows escaped suppression, and in Athens permission was granted for the erection of a puppet-stage in the theatre of Bacchus. It was managed by the showman, Pothin. Two other famous puppet managers in Greece were Heron, the Alexandrian mathematician, and Philo, an engineer of Byzantium. Both of them wrote treatises about puppet-shows. Heron's play, the Apotheosis of Bacchus, was given in one of the great theatres.

The puppet Bacchus stood between two altars in a little round temple. In one hand he raised his vine-covered staff; the other held a goblet aloft; at his feet lay a panther. Beside each of the dainty pillars that surrounded the temple stood a Bacchante poised all ready to dance in honour of the god. When the play began, the stage rolled forward into the arena, seemingly of its own accord, and stopped at the centre. Then a fire kindled on the altar in front of Bacchus and burned brightly. Milk gushed from the god's staff, and the cup in his hand overflowed with wine. The pedestal below the temple bloomed suddenly with garlands; tambourines and cymbals sounded; and the dancing Bacchantes circled around their god. As soon as

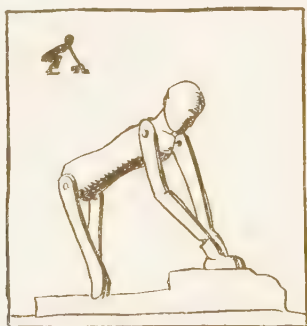


the music stopped, the little statue of the winged Victory that surmounted the dome turned around and Bacchus too faced the spectators on the opposite side of the arena. Then the flames leaped up on the second altar; milk jetted again from the thyrsus, and wine poured from the cup; and the Bacchantes repeated their dance. When the play was over the little stage rolled back to its place out of the audience's sight.

Throughout the performance no hand had touched the stage. How was it done? Heron explained the machinery in his treatise on automatic toys. Inside the pedestal was a hopper filled with the slippery grains of millet or mustard seed. When it was time for the performance to begin, an attendant pulled a string which opened the valve in the hopper. As the seeds poured downwards through the opening, heavy lead weights that were resting on them also dropped. It was the gradual sinking of these weights that caused all the miracles in the play. As they descended they pulled cords of various lengths, attached to different pivots and valves. These strings turned the wheels of the stage and the statues of Bacchus and Victory and the outer porch of the temple where the Bacchantes circled around their god. Some of the cords opened valves that allowed the milk and wine to flow through the staff and cup. Others pulled open a bronze door above a lighted lamp and let its flames shoot up through the opening to ignite a fire of chips and shavings all laid on the altar. And still others pulled out the trap door that held the garlands of flowers concealed in the cornice of the pedestal and let them fall in profuse clusters.



The puppet shows of both Heron and Philo were really elaborate mechanical toys, but the usual puppet plays of Greece could not have been automatic, for the Greek puppet showmen were called *neurospastes*, which means "they who pull the strings," and the operators stood aloft on a scaffold like the bridge of the modern puppet stage. Heron's and Philo's automatic plays only show what the real marionette dramas must have been in order to inspire such



*An Egyptian Jointed Toy.*

imitations. The puppet-shows themselves were undoubtedly imitations of the life-sized dramas of their day. The Greek plays were either festivals in honour of some god or dramatizations of stories in legendary history, acted on the stage while the chorus chanted the story of the play. When the miniature plays were being given, some one probably read a poem behind the scenes. There was a flute as well and a lyre to accompany the voice of the reader.

How the puppets came into Greece is a question the historians differ about. Perhaps the doll actors came from the Orient, or they may have come to Greece from Egypt.

When Herodotus visited that country more than four hundred years before Christ, he saw women in the procession at the feast of Osiris carrying images of the god, which were moved by strings. The little bones of jointed dolls with wire controls were found in the graves of Egyptian children. These stringed figures were probably only toys; but it is not unlikely that the first puppets were toys, especially as the word puppet came from the name of a doll. There must have been puppets before there were puppet plays just as there were people before there were professional actors. The children of primitive man had their doll play and that was probably the first puppet drama. It began ages before the days of the little Marys or Maccus or the Egyptian feasts, or even before mannikins first took the place of human beings and were sacrificed with dramatic rites to appease the anger of the gods.



## VIII

### Distant Relatives

“We are no other than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illumin’d Lantern held  
In Midnight by the Master of the Show.”

From *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyám.

## Distant Relatives

THE early generations of the Punch family must have scattered all over the face of the earth, for travellers in almost every country have brought home news of some puppet villain with a nut-cracker chin like Punch's and a criminal record like his, or even worse. Punch, or some cousin very like him, is found in Turkey, Egypt, India, in China, and even as far away as Kamchatka. The most famous of them all is the Turkish Punch. He is called Karageuz, which means Black Eye. He was named probably after the company he kept, for in Asia as well as in Europe many travelling puppet men were gipsies and the Turkish nickname for a gipsy was Black Eye. Karageuz wears a red felt cap like any other Turk, the same sort of hat that the young recruits wear. He acts to the music of the fife and drum in the coffee-houses and barracks and his coarse pranks amuse the Turks quite as much as Punch's nonsense pleases us. Karageuz has a partner buffoon, sometimes his victim and sometimes his deceiver, who accompanies him in all his adventures. They meet all sorts of people in their little stage, fools and knaves; ragged workmen and magnificent sultans, dashing soldiers and timid ladies; and animals who can talk as well as any one can. With them Karageuz shows the life of the streets, the cafés, and the baths; and they venture also into royal palaces. He makes fun of all the types of people who are



AN ARAB  
puppet



KARAGUZ,  
the TURK



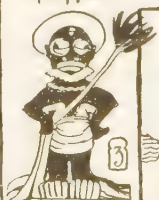
ASIATIC  
shadow picture



PUPPETS  
from JAVA



A CHINESE  
SHADOW



AN IMAGE  
from NIGERIA



A DANCER  
from HURMAH



NZINGALESE  
marionette



# Puppets from Far-off Lands.



A PUPPET  
from BALI



A JAPANESE  
ACTOR



EAST INDIAN  
PUPPET

MADGE ANDERSON.



found in Turkey, especially of such unbelievers as Greeks, Jews, and Armenians, who all appear in the plays, each one murdering the Turkish language in his own way. In Karaguez' stage all foreigners speak Turkish with an exaggerated foreign accent and each nationality is recognized by its speech, just as the comic Englishmen, Irishmen and Jews of the Western stage are known by the way they mispronounce the English language.

The puppet showmen of Turkey take special delight in presenting cripples on the stage. *Tirjaki*, a puppet with a crooked back, a nervous manner, and a tendency to fall asleep on all occasions, is a beloved figure of the Turkish plays, for the Turks enjoy seeing caricatures just as much as the showmen love to poke fun at people.

As early as the ninth and tenth centuries the wandering story-tellers amused the sultan by giving imitations of his subjects. When the sultan's fool, *Melikschal*, mimicked the Grand Vizier, his prank amused the courtiers so much that the Vizier's son fell into a rage and had the fool's tongue torn out. He paid for his cruelty with his life, for no one had any right to interfere with the sacred right of a fool to ridicule any one he pleased.

The puppet stage adopted the art of imitation which the old story tellers had developed. In the satirical days of the eighteenth century, shadow puppets amused the populace in Aleppo with such effective caricatures of persons prominent in political and social life that certain officials took shadow players under their special protection to make sure that the clever fellows would spare them from ridicule.

Every character in a Turkish play has his own little song,

and either he sings it as he enters, or else the orchestra plays the bit of music which identifies the character. Although the Turkish orchestra has as a rule only five instruments, music plays so great a part in the Turkish shadow plays that they are almost operas.

Besides the refrain which is always on his lips when he enters, the light hearted gipsy, Karageuz, knows the songs of many other characters, at least well enough to parody them, for like his Western cousin, Punch, he makes fun of every one whom he imitates and he imitates every one. When the Janissaries came back from the Russian War in 1768, they were shown on the puppet stage, in all the glory of their gorgeous and grotesque costumes, boastfully reciting their great deeds of valour. Karageuz was one of them and bragged so outrageously that the officials feared the hired soldiers would revenge themselves for the laughter Karageuz and his fellow puppets had won at their expense and would betray the Turkish government. So the authorities ordered the puppet troops disbanded and the play was withdrawn. The police were obliged to interfere again when the officers of a bankrupt mercantile house asked for protection from the courts against the insinuations of Karageuz, who was appearing on his little stage as a merchant in their line of business and displaying every cheating trick he could think of, to the huge enjoyment of his audience.

The Turkish puppet plays begin with a long prologue spoken by Karageuz. Then Hadschiewad and Karageuz plan to get money in some way or other. Karageuz is set up in business either as a beggar or a boatman, a letter writer, a schoolmaster, an ice man, or a doctor for the insane who

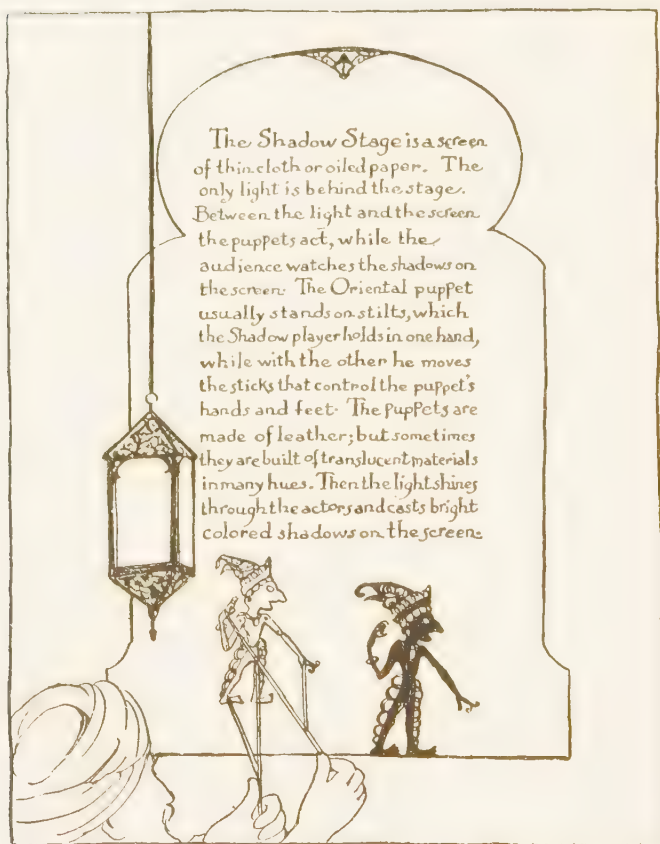
exhibits his patients for money. The various foreigners of Constantinople are his customers and he cheats them all and beats them, not only with his bargains but with his club. Then a Policeman comes to arrest the dishonest business man, but Hadschiewad pleads so eloquently for his friend that the officer allows Karageuz to go free, on this one condition, that on the next night he will play his part even more jovially.

In one play Karageuz was persuaded to impersonate a maiden who was about to be married, but when the unfortunate bridegroom first gazed at his new wife, he discovered her to be a man, and a man of muscle too, who beat the surprised bridegroom vigorously. The story may have been taken from the *Arabian Nights*, for not a few of the Thousand and One Tales have been acted by the Turkish puppets. This play was particularly suited to the little stage as it contained the picturesque marriage procession, which is a very imposing ceremony in the East. It is one of the most beautiful scenes of the Eastern puppet plays, shown as it is, in silhouette, moving slowly across the stage.

The Oriental puppets, like the women in the Eastern countries, are always veiled from the public gaze. The audience sees only their shadows on the curtain. Karageuz plays his part between a lamp and a screen. The light shines through the transparent material of which his many-coloured garments are made, and his shadow on the curtain glows with such bright hues within the framework of dark shell that he looks like a figure in stained glass. The older Turkish shadow puppets were often made of so many colours that when the light shimmered through the cur-

tain they seemed to be set thick with jewels of myriad hues.

The puppets of the Mohammedan countries are not real-



### *The Puppet Stage of the East.*

istic figures like the Western doll actors, for the Mohammedans believe that at the Judgment Day God will demand that all makers of images provide a soul for every figure

they have made. However, when puppet showmen were arrested and brought before earthly judges on the charge of representing living beings, the court declared that, although it was forbidden to imitate live creatures, the shadow puppets could not possibly be living when they had such holes through their bodies as those in which the controlling sticks were fastened, and therefore the puppets did not come within the meaning of the law. In spite of this decision it was believed that an angel would no more enter a home in which a shadow figure was found than he would come to a house in which there was a dog. But this danger was evaded by giving the shadow plays out of doors in a garden or a court, when the weather was fine, and, when it rained, in dens or caverns into which indeed no angel would ever care to venture. "If it were forbidden, I would forbid it," said the Sultan Ibrahim, who was a famous patron of shadow plays. One showman at his court presented a realistic battle between a garrison, a galley, and a freight ship, made of rockets that went up when the ship was fired; and the Sultan graciously offered him the position of Grand Admiral. However, the shadow player wisely refused to take advantage of his monarch's joke.

The puppets continued to enjoy the royal favour and even to-day the Sultan keeps his court shadow players in Jyldyz, and in Constantinople Karageuz figures are still set up in the Saddler's Bazaars ready to play.

The Turkish shadow plays first appeared in Constantinople in the fifteenth century, a short time after the Mohammedan Crescent supplanted the Cross on the Dome of St. Sophia. Wherever the Turkish rule spread, the shadow

puppets followed. In Greece Karageuz bobs up in the most unexpected places and, besides the two chief parts in the Turkish plays, Karageuz and his dupe, the Greeks have introduced a native actor to sing and talk with them. Karageuz has performed in Roumania; and in Servia the shadow play is a well-developed art.

Punch is so much like Karageuz and the Oriental clowns that it is possible that the jolly little European criminal himself may have been an immigrant from the East. No traces of him can be found in Europe before the days of Rome, although other puppets have been discovered.

There is a tradition that the Turkish shadow play was brought from the East by the Persians. Karageuz loved to bring into his prologue the unpronounceable name of Shejx Kuschteri, who came from Persia in the fourteenth century, and the Turks call the shadow stage after him. Although they had their own word for the shadow play in the thirteenth century, we do not know that they were acquainted with it before that time. But in Persia the shadows were evidently an old story a century earlier, when Omar Khayyám wrote his famous lines about "the moving row of magic shadow shapes." The lantern of Omar's verse was a paper pail decorated with silhouettes. The figures hung from a metal disk in the top, which revolved with the heat of the candle and made the figures on the surface "come and go."

The shadow puppets played in the tents of wandering Arabs, but they were more primitive than the Turkish actors, and they were not coloured. The Arabians never bowed their heads under the Persian yoke nor accepted the



Persian influence, as the Turks did. Perhaps that is why the Arabs carried with them through the deserts of Africa cruder shadow figures than the delicate puppets that the Persians brought from the East, and why Karageuz did not wear his coloured dress when he toured the North African shores.

While the Arab shadow actors were not so elegant, they were also not so worldly as the Turkish puppets. Their plays were often deeply religious. And the Egyptian shadow players, who had learned their business from the Arabs, recited their plays in rhymed prose and poetry, which was more appropriate to the historical plays of the Egyptian shadow theatre than the every-day slang that the Turkish puppets used.

There is an Armenian servant called Sergis in the modern Turkish shadow shows, who is very like the clown called Scharkis who appears in some of the Egyptian plays, which in spite of their high-sounding language and high moralizing tone, are always full of fun.

There are three Egyptian shadow plays of the thirteenth century still in existence, recorded by the Egyptian doctor, Mohammed. The first one was opened by the Fool, Taif al Xiiāl, who complained that now he had returned to Egypt he found it very much changed. Alas, the Sultan had decreed prohibition. Taif told how he had been beaten for being intoxicated, and he cracked the same old jokes that prohibition introduced to the vaudeville stage of America, suggesting several ways of getting drunk in spite of the laws. Then he spoke a rhymed prologue and sang several comic songs.



As soon as this speech was over, the director called out, "Oh, face of my dreams! Oh, you symmetrical perfect one!" And a little hunch-backed figure, very like Punch, appeared. He greeted the audience with a song about his hump, which he said was like the camel's hump, and the lute's, and the ship's, whose hunched back saved it from capsizing in the storm. He explained that, being a searcher for the stone of wisdom, he had become hunched from bending over to search. Then he spoke a second prologue:

"I greet the gentlemen who are present with the greeting of one who longs to see them and is downcast. I greet those who are in this place, these God fearing noble gentlemen, for they are the best of all whom one greets with words and the noblest whom one shakes by the hands. Praise be to Allah and to Mohammed, his Prophet. May Allah bless and protect the Sultan."

Then he too took up the subject of prohibition. Now that the Devil was killed by the Sultan's decree, nobody could be bad at all, he said, and he sang a sad dirge for the poor dead Devil.

"Alas," he announced, "Fate has parted me from my brother, Uisal, and I must go out into the world and look for him. For my brother's sake have I left my home and gone into the wide world in the hope that some time, maybe, we will be companions again."

The Herald cried, "Oh, Emir Uisal," and a soldier appeared, wearing a huge military hat and painted mustachios. "I greet every one who is present and hears my words, who knows me and has already found pleasure in my good-natured humour, but to him who does not know

me, allow me to present myself. I am the Father of Lies, known as the Emir Uisal, the Master of the Cudgel." The Emir Uisal next set forth his qualities and ability. He could box ears quicker than a baker could slap his dough. He could eat more than fire, and drink more than sand. His wit was sharper than a lancet and his voice was more elegant than a frog's, so he said.

"Call my secretary," he shouted, and an old man appeared who kissed the Emir's hand. The Emir asked for his health, and the old man complained of all sorts of ailments. But his employer paid no attention to this account of his secretary's symptoms; he asked him to bring in "certain writings." The Secretary called, "Oh, Scharkis! Bring in the letters and the money bag!" Immediately a slave appeared and, after greeting the audience, put down the huge sacks he was carrying. Then in humorous imitation of legal language, the Secretary read "the letters patent," as requested by Taif. After the praise of Allah and his Prophet, with which all legal documents began, was this: "The pride of religion, the father of stupid ones and of the crazy, proclaims this Emir as the king of Fools." This proclamation was followed by effusive praise of the Emir's popularity, his mirthfulness, and his possessions. The Emir was then assigned a comic realm, and ridiculous gifts and raiment.

In the next act the Emir wished to establish himself and marry, so a go-between was called in. She suggested the name of a girl, whom she pictured as being perfect, "White, smooth of cheek, as lovely as if she were a pearl hidden in softness." Her charms took a long time to relate. After

the Emir and the go-between had come to an agreement, the marriage-maker performed the bridal ceremony. He began with the usual religious phrases, and then declared that this Uisal was of praiseworthy character, because of the money he had paid over to the parents of this shy maiden, "this well-guarded pearl, Dabba, the daughter of Miftah," and closed with the wish, "Allah guard you against divorce and parting." At this point, it was discovered that the Emir was very poor, that he had lost all his fortune; but the marriage went on. However, at the unveiling of the bride, the "lovely pearl" was found to be a hideous creature with a nose as large as Punch's. The bridegroom fell into a faint. After he recovered he raged so fiercely at the marriage-maker and the bride that every one ran away. Then he threatened the husband of the go-between, an old complainer, who appeared with a characteristic song. The Emir beat him and dragged the go-between around the stage so vigorously that Taif said to the old complainer, "We need a doctor." The Doctor came, complaining that he hated to be called out of bed in the middle of the night, and pronounced the go-between dead.

"Oh, my brother Taif," said the Emir, "the only thing we can do now is to go far away. I have decided on a pilgrimage, and have chosen truth instead of deception, and I intend to wash away my sins with the waters of Zem Zem. I have taken the holy vow to visit the grave of the Master of all people—Allah, bless him, and his whole family! Do not forget me! We must now part!"

The play, Taif and the Emir, has a typical Mohammedan ending. The Mohammedans think that a believer attains

the character of an unbeliever through wrongdoing, and must wash his sin away by making a pilgrimage. Even the Turkish plays, although they are often low in taste, seldom end without a moral. The preaching Mohammedan shadow play was one of the instruments that spread the ideas of Islam in Africa.

It is not to be supposed that the puppets themselves did not exist in Africa before the shadow drama came with Mohammedanism. The showman Heron came from Alexandria, and stringed dolls were known in ancient Egypt. In every savage tribe there must have been some primitive form of puppet play, even if it was nothing more than the ceremonial worship of fetiches and the use of moving dolls in mysterious rites.

Marionette plays have been seen by explorers among the savage tribes near the mouth of the River Niger. Their stage was made of blankets stretched around four stout stakes. Above the top of this curtain the little actors appeared. Three boys ran around outside the curtained space, beating the blanket screen with palm leaf brushes, so that if the managers behind the scenes should shake the curtain, no one would notice it. They explained that this was necessary to "make the spirits talk" and was part of the "broom Juju." Whenever an actor appeared one of these boys stepped up and touched it with a black cock on a stick. This ceremony was supposed to confer the power of speech on the image. The managers disguised their voices with a small tube of corn-stalk, which had the membrane from beneath a bat's wing stretched across one end. The tom-toms were beaten throughout the performance.

When peace was declared between two warring towns, the vanquished townsmen were expected to give a play before their conquerors. The next year the victors would return the compliment by presenting another play in the conquered town. The rehearsals were held at night so no one could learn the secrets until the public performance was given. No woman might ever know how the dolls moved and talked. If, when the players journeyed to another town, one of them should carelessly let an actor fall so that the audience, especially the women, could see how the dolls worked, he and his whole company would be slain by the townspeople or else sold into slavery.

The marionette play described by the explorer, Amaury Talbot, was called "Akan." This may have been because "Akkan" was an African name for the pygmy people, for the marionettes themselves looked very much like black pygmies. Their huge heads and their squatty little bodies were decorated like painted savages. To occidental eyes they seemed quite hideous, but not so repulsive as some of the puppets in those far Eastern countries where the shadow play was born.

Whether it was the Persians or the Arabs who first brought them, or the Moslem vagrant dervishes, or the gipsy outcasts from Northern India, the shadow actors all came out of the East, where puppets are of great antiquity. A thousand years before the Christian era, the Emperor Muh of the Chow Dynasty, called "The Magnificent King," made a journey into Turkestan and brought home with him "several skilful artificers and the arts of inlaying metal

and of making paste-gems, jade, amber, marionettes and other souvenirs."

There is a story that King Muh once commanded a puppet showman named Yen to give a play for the entertainment of himself and his houseful of wives. Yen was so anxious to please his sovereign that he went a bit too far and allowed one of his puppets to become too complimentary to the ladies of the royal household. The king became very angry at Yen's impertinence. "Off with the insolent fellow's head!" was the royal command. It was only by cutting his actors to pieces and showing that they were nothing but leather, wood and glue that the too rash Yen saved his head from decorating a pike on the walls of the royal city.

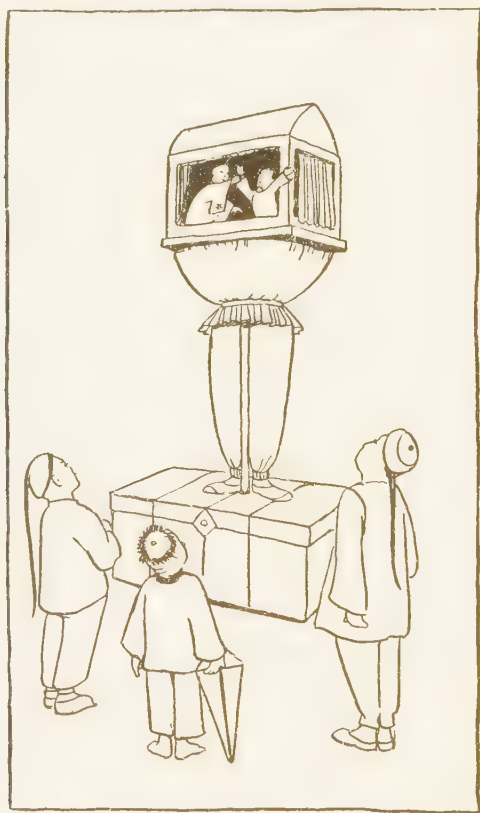
To-day the Chinese puppets play about the streets of Peking, while in the villages and along the country roads a puppet show that is very like Punch and Judy amuses the Chinese children. Sometimes the actors are marionettes moved with silken strings, and sometimes they are puppets worked on the hands of the showman who kneels inside a box and is hidden from view by curtains.

Often a Chinese puppet showman conceals himself from the audience by stepping into a huge cloth bag. He ties it tight at the ankles and leaves it loose at the neck so he can move the Chinese Punch and Judy on his hands. Over his head he places the box stage, which rests on his shoulders, and he stands on another box, visible yet invisible, while he gives the play. When the show is over, he packs his voluminous disguise, the actors and the stage all into the box, and goes on his way with his theatre under his



arm. The Chinese call this travelling puppet show a linen bag play.

The linen bag play is also popular in Japan, and so is



*A Puppet Show in China*

the "neck theatre," in which the showman uses only a little board, hanging by a string around his neck, for a stage. The most primitive kind of puppet actor in Japan is a



small doll which is held in the hand, like a jumping-jack, and moved by two or three strings. The marionettes managed by strings from above were imported from China, and so were the shadow plays. The Chinese puppet showmen carried the drama of the screen with them, when they travelled to countries where the shadow play was not known, and so the shadow puppets became known as Chinese Shadows.

There is a Mohammedan story about a Chinese shadow showman who took his puppets to the Court of the Khan Oktai, the son of the great Mongol conqueror, Jengis Khan. The Chinese players showed a play in which all sorts and types of people appeared. Among them was a white-haired old man who was dragged behind a horse by his turban.

"Who is this figure?" asked Oktai.

"One of those rebel Mohammedans," said the showman, "whom the soldiers are bringing in from the cities."

The Khan ordered him to stop the play, and then commanded his servants to bring out of the treasure chamber jewelled cups from Bagdad and Buxara, and Arabian works of art and ornaments set with gems, and examples of Chinese craftsmanship. When these articles were brought, it was easily seen that the finest Chinese handicraft was not so beautiful as the least of the Arabian works of art.

Then said the Khan: "The meanest beggar of the Moslems rules over several Chinese slaves, but not a single Mandarin owns a Moslem servant. That is the will of divine wisdom, which establishes the rank and place of every one, even the lowest of mankind. And in keeping with this plan, the great Khan has in his wisdom set the

blood money of a Moslem at forty gold pieces, but for a Chinaman, only a donkey. Therefore how can any one put the people of Islam into such a position of disgrace. This time I will grant you your life. But take yourself out of our sight and never again go about exhibiting such a scene as this." This was in the thirteenth century, a hundred years before the Hindus in the north of India, who are known as the Gipsies, were driven out by the army of Tamurlaine and took the puppet show with them as they roamed over the world.

Although the shadow puppet plays were known as Chinese Shadows, the Chinese were not the originators of the shadow drama. They only brought it out of India and carried it to the Mohammedan countries.

Among the Aryan people of India the shadow plays were known long before the living drama was. They were mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit writings and, they say, marionettes play at royal exhibitions now. The Indian puppets acted stories from the epic of Ramayana, about the Aryan conquest of southern India and the great fight when Heaven-sent Vishnu overthrew the evil spirit, Ravana. The puppets also attempted the heroic deeds described in the Mahabharata. There were plenty of adventures to act, for the Mahabharata is the longest epic in the world; it has over a hundred thousand verses, and is eight times as long as the Iliad and the Odyssey together.

The Indian buffoon is called Vidusaka; he is a hunch-backed dwarf with protruding teeth. Vidusaka is greedy and quarrelsome, insolent and cowardly, and as ready with his stick as Punch. He is the forerunner of Karageuz,

whom the Gipsies from India showed in western Asia, and, though geographically far removed, he is, in his behaviour, a very close likeness to his Western relative, Punch.

In comparison with the Indian puppets, the Turkish actors of the Karageuz plays are primitive. Even the finest of the old Turkish shadows had no such delicate detail as the East Indian and the Javanese and Siamese figures, or even as the Chinese shadows, which often displayed elaborate coloured patterns and embroidery on their garments. The Eastern shadow figures are cut with great skill out of the finest leather. Their limbs are moved by sticks from below, although the rounded puppets of India and China are often stringed like our marionettes.

In Siam the shadow actors are very elaborately dressed and surrounded with intricate scrolls and latticed frames; they show real character in their faces. But in Java, the puppets, although they are decorated with delicately beautiful patterns, have hideous bird-like profiles and long scrawny arms and fingers. On the island of Bali, east of Java, the last stronghold of the old Javanese Hindu religion, the shadow figures have human faces and are very different from the distorted figures of the Javanese plays. The Javanese are good Mohammedans to-day and have as much aversion to displaying images of living creatures as their Moslem brothers in Eastern Asia and Africa.

But they cannot use the same excuse for their shadow figures that the Sultan's judges did, for the guiding sticks do not penetrate the actors' bodies; they are wedged tight to the figures. In Java the religious difficulty is evaded by placing the shadow actors so high on the stage that the

tops of their heads "are cut off by the ceiling" and so of course the puppets cannot be living.

The Javanese are so fond of their puppet shows that they frequently watch a play all night. Sometimes the plays last several days. The puppet plays are called the Wajang. They show stories from the Sanskrit epics of India and explain the early Javanese idea of the world; and they are filled with supernatural interference, and magic enchantments, battles and giants, and the jests of a buffoon named Semar, who takes the part of a servant. Every one who attends the puppet plays brings an offering of food which is placed in a copper bowl, where the spirits can find it, and before the performance begins incense is burned to the gods.

In the middle of the huge curtain is seen a fantastic vine with interlacing branches. Monkeys and birds climb about in it, and beneath it two grim door-guards stand watch. When the play begins, the strange shadow tree vanishes. The stage manager is called the Dalang. He sits on a mat and gives the play, with the grotesque little actors and stage properties arranged around him, all ready for their exits and entrances. Back of him is the orchestra scraping strings and beating tom-toms to accompany the explanations of the Dalang. Whenever a new figure enters, the orchestra plays. The men in the audience are allowed to sit at the right of the Dalang and see the actual puppets perform and the children sit at the Dalang's left hand. But the women are not permitted to see the real puppets act. They are required to stay on the other side of the screen, which separates them from the play, so that they see

only the shadows of the moving puppets. The transparent sticks that guide the actors do not show on the screen.

There is a form of this play even more curious than the Wajang. In it women appear imitating the action and gestures of the puppets, while their grotesque leather models sit in a row across the front of the stage and grin at them.

The Javanese have a legend of the puppet Adam and Eve. A woman who was washing rice one morning beside a river saw the trunk of a tree floating toward her. Although she tried several times to push it out into the stream, it kept returning to her until she drew it up on the shore. Three days later she dreamed that she heard a voice begging to be released. The woman told her husband about the dream and about the floating tree and he brought the log home. When he cut it open, he found within it a puppet similar to those of the Wajang plays, and they named it Kjai Gandroung. Several days later the woman again dreamed that she heard a voice crying from a tree in front of the house, "I long to be reunited with my husband, Kjai Gandroung!" The woman's husband cut off a branch and discovered another puppet which they called Hjai Gandroung. He made other puppets like the first two and a box to keep them in. The box was handed down in his family to the Dalang of Pagoung. Poor people made offerings to the puppets for the relief of their wants; and when an extraordinary show was desired, the Dalang of Pagoung was invited to bring his actors.

This story may or may not be true; but it shows that puppets are of such great antiquity that their origin, like that of their model, man, is lost in tradition.



## IX

### The Japanese Romeo and Juliet



“For never was a story of more woe  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.”

## The Japanese Romeo and Juliet

IN Japan the live actors imitate the rhythmic gestures of the marionettes. The Japanese do not care for realistic art; they prefer conventional acting and decorative painting. Their plays are really poems; the actors chant their speeches in time to their gestures; and the chorus, sitting on a platform near the stage, declaims the descriptive parts to the music of the three-stringed guitar which the Japanese call the samisen. Before the samisen was imported into Japan, the chanters accompanied themselves by tapping their fans to mark the time of the verse. When the puppets act the plays, the chorus gives all their speeches for them. Most of the epic dramas in which the live actors now appear were written for the marionettes, and so the verses which the chorus chants describe all the changes of expression on the actors' faces.

Although the dramas are written in verse, the language is very simple. The peasants and coolies have no difficulty in understanding them, and the epic plays are very popular with the masses. The story of O-Somé and Hisamatsu, the Japanese Romeo and Juliet, is performed at one theatre or another every day in the year and causes so many tears to be shed that undoubtedly the tear-rooms, into which writers about Japan say the ladies retire when they are overcome by the tragic scenes, are crowded. But perhaps they mean the tea-rooms, for there is one in every Japa-

nese theatre. Refreshment is necessary, for the play continues from six o'clock in the morning until nine at night.

The story of O-Somé and Hisamatsu is very sad. Japanese love-stories are often tragedies, for in Japan young people cannot always select their own life partners. They regard their debt to their ancestors as a sacred obligation, and to marry for the honour of the family is part of their duty to their forefathers. At every Japanese wedding a little dwarfed pine-tree is placed before the guests. It is the symbol of the continuance of life. Hisamatsu's name means a pine-tree. It also means "a long time in the future," for one of the charms of the Japanese language is the double meanings of the words. The literature of Japan is enriched with puns that deepen the thought instead of lightening it to a jest as our puns do.

O-Somé means here, "Little Somé," although sometimes the O before a name is a term of respect. The rest of O-Somé's name means the dye that is like the blush on her cheek. Somé has also the meaning, "just beginning" or "something new." When we consider how bound by tradition the Japanese people are and what the names O-Somé and Hisamatsu mean to them, we can understand why these lovers could never marry in this world.

The play of O-Somé and Hisamatsu is part of the Shinju epic, the Song of Judgment and Punishment. Shinju is the Japanese name for a play like *Romeo and Juliet*, one in which "a pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life." This play was written by Chikamatsu Hanji, a poet of the eighteenth century. The Japanese playwrights, like the colour-print artists, took part of their masters' names as their own

and Chikamatsu Hanji named himself for the great Chikamatsu Monzayemon, the Shakespeare of Japan.

Monzayemon wrote such affecting Shinju dramas that the number of double suicides among lovers in Japan increased alarmingly. This first Chikamatsu wrote his plays for the Takemoto Za in Osaka, the same theatre for which Chikamatsu Hanji wrote the sad play of O-Somé and Hisamatsu. All the Japanese marionette theatres are called Za, which means a meeting place, and Takemoto means "The High First" Za. It was named for its founder, Takemoto Gidayu, who was so famous a reciter of poems that the epic drama was called Gidayu in his honour.

Before the days of Takemoto Gidayu and the great playwright, Chikamatsu Monzayemon, the epic plays were called Joruri dramas, after the story of Lady Joruri, a very popular poem, which the chanters recited in the late sixteenth century, about the time when the samisen was imported from Loochoo. The heroine of this poem was a beautiful girl, the daughter of a Samurai of high rank; she was named for the god Joruri Ko, to whom her father had prayed for a child. From this epic, all compositions which the professional reciters used were called Joruri and the chanters of the poems, Joruri Chanters.

It is appropriate that the plays should be named after a god, for the Japanese drama began in the temple like the Western plays.

In the ninth century, the same time that the mystery plays were beginning, Japanese priests danced a symbolic dance to drive away the poisonous fumes of the earthquake at Nara, and thus, it is said, the Japanese drama was born.

In memory of this Nara miracle, an actor dressed as an old priest performs a rhythmic fan dance as prologue to every play, while the chorus invokes the mercy of the saving gods. The Japanese temples still shelter the drama. On feast-days, religious pantomimes are shown on an open stage before the entrance. The shows are acted by boys wearing grotesque masks.

The Japanese puppets have conventionalized faces with exaggerated expressions, like these masks. They are gorgeously dressed in rich stuffs and are so beautifully constructed and so carefully painted that it is not surprising to hear that the great wood-block artist, Toyokuni the First, obtained his early artistic training in the shop of his father, who was a maker of puppets. Toyokuni's finest pictures were his portraits of actors. The exaggerated poses and the terrifying masked faces in his spirited drawings were exactly like those of the puppets in his father's shop, but they were also like the living actors of the artist's time.

The marionettes of the Japanese dramas are almost as large as the living actors and they are so heavy that several puppeteers are needed to control one character. The puppets' guardians often wear a black gown and cover their heads with a big black hood to show that they are invisible. Even when the real actors appear, these shadows follow them about the stage, handing fans, tea-cups, or swords to the players and opening and shutting doors for them, just as if they were still puppets who could not do things for themselves. Like these "invisible" property-men, the managers of the puppets are in plain sight of the audience, but no one in a Japanese audience would ever be so impolite as

to notice in the love-scenes between O-Somé and Hisamatsu that the lovers are not alone.

Hisamatsu was eighteen years old and the blushing O-Somé was a year younger. She was the daughter of O-Katsu, who kept the oil-shop in Osaka where Hisamatsu was in service as a clerk, and there the happy lovers saw each other every day. The head-clerk of the oil-shop was named Kosuké, "Chief Assistant." Kosuké also means "crafty nature" and he was the villain of the play. There was a rival lover too, named Yamagaya Sashiro, who employed Kosuké as a go-between in his suit for O-Somé's hand. As his first name means an enterprise for pecuniary profit and his last a string of coins, we know he was rich. But as Sashiro also stands for "Donkey" and "Tom-tit," we know he loved in vain. Besides he was thirty-one years old. Yet in spite of the hopeless handicap of this advanced age, Sashiro went every day to some shrine and prayed the gods and Buddha to give him the love of O-Somé.

One day in the play he was engaged in devout prayer, walking up and down the pavement between the curved portico at one end of the stage and the thatched Sanctuary at the other end, which showed that the scene was in the temple. He had just finished making the hundred-fold penance and was now flat on his face. His embroidered sleeves swept the pavement as he clapped his hands and called on the gods of the Sun and War, of the Harvest, of the Rice and the Foxes. To each one he prayed, "Grant that I may have for my wife O-Somé, daughter of the oil-shop keeper at the end of the Kawaraya bridge. Almighty God, cause her heart to be filled with love for me!"

As soon as he spoke the name of Inari, the patron god of Foxes, the fox-like face of Kosuké peered around the corner and the crafty clerk stood laughing at the devotions of the poor rich young man.

"This pious donkey will keep on praying forever if I do not rescue him," exclaimed Kosuké, and he laid his hand on Sashiro's shoulder. "Mister Sashiro, here is the answer to all your prayers," he said, holding up a scroll which his black-gowned guardian had drawn from the front of his kimono.

"Is it from O-Somé? Has she answered my letter so soon?" The rich suitor sprang to his feet and reached for the paper. But Kosuké held it just out of his reach.

"I will read it for you," said the sly fellow, "and you must give me a thank-offering for each encouraging sentence. If you do not agree to my conditions, you shall not hear or have the letter."

"I will pay whatever you ask," promised the love-sick youth. He was so anxious to know what answer O-Somé had made to his proposal of marriage that he tried to look over Kosuké's shoulder. But the clerk pushed him away. Very slowly he unrolled the long paper scroll on which O-Somé's answer was written, and, beginning at the bottom, he read the letter aloud, one sentence at a time.

"'Dear Sashiro:'" he began. "'Many thank-yous for your favour of the other day. I am very pleased that you value me so highly!'" Sashiro strutted and waved his fan pompously. "'Many thank-yous,' observe," said Kosuké. "'Very pleased!' Give me the first payment, for



what follows is important and deserves a very large thank offering." So the poor love-mad Sashiro paid the price to hear these words. "'I am very sorry but I am obliged to decline your proposal.'" Sashiro groaned. "Do not be down-hearted," said Kosuké. "There is still more; it begins, 'If you are'—but as you are so easily discouraged, I do not believe that I ought to read it to you, at least not for such a small thank-offering."

Finally after the foolish Sashiro had doubled and redoubled the reward, Kosuké read, "'If you are really in earnest, I hope you will entirely give up the thought of marrying me. It is impossible for me to regard you with love and respect.'" "

At this Sashiro was so pitifully downcast that Kosuké thought his victim would soon be a suicide and then there would be no more thank-offerings for him.

"Come, Sashiro," he said. "What if the maiden does not love you? It is only because that silly youth Hisamatsu has won her heart. But he is young and poor. O-Somé's mother will never consent to his marrying her. It is the mother, O-Katsu, whom you should be writing letters to. If I am not mistaken, she will not refuse your offer for her daughter's hand so readily. Is she not indebted to your honourable wealthy father for a considerable sum of money?"

"One hundred fifty ryo," Sashiro said.

"Ah!" The chorus explained Kosuké's thoughtful posture. "Exactly the sum that the silly Hisamatsu has been sent to collect from a customer this very afternoon. Then O-Katsu can free herself from this obligation—unless—"

unless the foolish, love-sick clerk should be robbed. Ah! I have it!

"Well, Sashiro," Kosuké spoke out loud now. "You had better implore your honourable father to ask O-Katsu to give O-Somé to his handsome young son. And you had better consult a necromancer, and hire him to drive the love of the stripling Hisamatsu out of O-Somé's heart. Here is your love-letter." As they went off together, the sentimental rich man tenderly placed O-Somé's letter in his elegantly embroidered sleeve.

Kosuké arrived at the oil-shop well satisfied with the day's profits. He had picked Hisamatsu's pocket of the one hundred fifty ryo that the young clerk had collected from his mistress's customer. He hid behind the warehouse out of sight of the shop window and counted the money to see that it was all there, while his invisible assistant helped him empty his purse and put back the coins. Kosuké had also collected half of the necromancer's fee. "Sashiro did not understand," he said, "how the fortune-teller could know his name and all the things that troubled him. But I had told them all to him while Sashiro waited. How simple a study is necromancy when one understands it!"

Meanwhile, the honest clerk, Hisamatsu, ignorant of the loss of his mistress's money, returned to the oil-shop and with him was his pretty sweetheart O-Somé. They said farewell in the courtyard.

"Are you sorry you met me, Hisamatsu?" O-Somé loved to hear her lover say that he was happy.

"The gods were kind to me when they sent you to walk near the temple," answered the simple clerk, never suspect-

ing that O-Somé knew he must pass by the temple on his way homeward. And this was the call of the gods.

Their farewells were so prolonged that the audience feared they were never to see each other again and in truth a shadow was falling across their path.

It was the cunning Kosuké coming around the corner of the warehouse. He immediately demanded the money which the young clerk had been sent to collect and then Hisamatsu discovered the loss of his purse. While the surprised young man was exclaiming over his loss, Kosuké raised such an uproar that the proprietor of the oil-shop came out to see what was the matter. As soon as O-Katsu appeared, Kosuké accused Hisamatsu of stealing the money and spending it and, as the surprised young clerk could only stammer his own amazement at the disappearance of the money and had no explanations to offer, O-Katsu felt obliged to send him to his home until the mystery should be cleared. She ordered her head-clerk to accompany the young man to Nozaki, although O-Somé protested that the young clerk was innocent of theft. While the mother was drying her daughter's tears, Kosuké struck at Hisamatsu and drove him before him off the stage, calling him a thief and a blackguard. He intended that Hisamatsu should not return to interfere with Sashiro's love suit.

The cherry trees were pink in the little village of Nozaki, a few miles from Osaka, where Kyusaku, the kind foster father of Hisamatsu, lived. He was moving about in his thatched house with the front walls open, and the chanter told that this honest old man had already heard of his son's loss. Kyusaku is Japanese for Poor Harvest, which was

the reason Hisamatsu had gone into service with O-Katsu, whose name means Provisions; but the old man intended to pay Hisamatsu's debt. He had sold his little piece of land and had mortgaged the dress and hair ornaments of his step-daughter, O-Mitsu, which she cheerfully gave.

Kyusaku had donned his blue cotton kimono and was just going to take the money to his foster son's employer. O-Mitsu begged her step-father to wait until the next morning, but he insisted that he could easily walk to Osaka and back before dusk, although it was then long past noon. He made light of her fears for him, but cautioned her to take care of his sick wife. Then he set out for Osaka.

He had been gone only a short time, when the unfortunate Hisamatsu, dismissed from service, returned to his foster father's house. The wicked Kosuké followed him home and, when O-Mitsu joyfully greeted "Mr. Hisamatsu," he brought tears to her eyes, which the property manager wiped away with a paper handkerchief, by telling slanderous stories about Hisamatsu's devotion to O-Somé.

If he had gone into the house with his shoes on, he could not have been ruder. He blustered about and declared that Kyusaku was in hiding and, although O-Mitsu implored him not to disturb her foster mother, who was very ill in the next room, he insisted on searching the house for the old man. When Hisamatsu protested he only knocked the poor youth down and trampled on him.

Fortunately Kyusaku had heard in the village that Hisamatsu was on his way home. O-Mitsu saw him coming back and called, "Father, hurry and save Hisamatsu!" The old man rushed in, seized the wicked guest and threw him

across the room. Then with true Japanese politeness, he ignored all the unpleasantness, and thanked Kosuké for bringing Hisamatsu safely home. "Sir," he said, "will you not take some refreshment? O-Mitsu, prepare tea and food for our honourable guest." The daughter of the house obediently hung the kettle on the chain over the fireplace in the floor. But Kyusaku rudely refused the invitation. However, he did not refuse to take the money which Kyusaku paid him to make good Hisamatsu's loss.

As soon as this disagreeable visitor had departed, the foster father turned the conversation to what he thought would be a pleasant subject, and proposed the marriage of O-Mitsu to Hisamatsu. "Your step-sister is now sixteen years old, and this union has always been my dearest wish and that of her foster mother too," said Kyusaku, true to the other meaning of his name, "Old Plan." "I want her to see you happy together before she goes to the next world," he said.

Poor Hisamatsu did not know what to say. He loved O-Somé and yet his filial duty as a Japanese son demanded that he marry to please his father. He stood silent in confusion. But Kyusaku only thought that Hisamatsu was too bashful to answer and he went on with his plans for the wedding. O-Mitsu, he said, could stay and prepare the wedding feast, while Hisamatsu and he announced the happy news to the sick mother.

O-Mitsu loved Hisamatsu and while she busied herself daintily stirring the rice with her little chop-sticks and while the shadowy assistant set out the bowls for the nuptial drink of saké, she kept thinking how happy she would be

when she and Hisamatsu were married. Her joyous thoughts were interrupted by a girl's voice asking, "Is this the home of Mr. Kyusaku? And has a young man named Hisamatsu been here?" At the door appeared O-Somé. O-Mitsu knew who it was. She knew by the fashionable hair ornaments, by the elegant embroidered dress and by the beauty of the visitor. Although O-Mitsu did not really believe the stories Kosuké had told, she was jealous and, refusing to accept the coral beads which O-Somé offered her as a gift, slammed the door shut in the pretty visitor's face.

When Hisamatsu came into the room he heard a loud cough outside and peering through a crack in the door he saw his sweetheart, O-Somé, walking about among the blossoming plum-trees and slender bamboos in the miniature landscape back of the house. Fearing that she would leave before he could see her, and yet not quite daring to call her, he communicated with his sweetheart by making remarks to Kyusaku which O-Somé out in the garden could hear and understand. "It is not yet the time or the place," said Hisamatsu in a loud tone.

"The time and place for what?" asked Kyusaku. "What in the world are you talking about?"

But O-Mitsu knew what he was talking about, and in her jealousy she foolishly repeated the stories which the wicked Kosuké had told about O-Somé and Hisamatsu.

At that Hisamatsu grew very angry. "Stupid!" he cried. "Never let me hear you repeat such tales again, or I will make you repent bitterly!" But Kyusaku only thought they were having a lover's quarrel.



"Wait until you are married before you begin to squabble," he laughed, and took O-Mitsu with him into the other room to care for her mother.

As soon as Hisamatsu was alone he ran to the door and called softly to O-Somé. After the property manager had taken off her sandals and laid them beside the door, she entered the house. O-Somé told Hisamatsu that she had decided to die by her own hand—she had brought a dagger with her—and then Hisamatsu would be free from his promise to her and he could fulfil his obligation to his family by marrying O-Mitsu. Hisamatsu confessed that he also had planned suicide. The lovers wept and agreed to die together.

It was O-Mitsu who saved them. She had heard their whispers through the paper wall that separated the rooms and was already ashamed of her jealous anger. Now she came onto the stage, wearing the veil and robes of a Buddhist nun, and explained that she had renounced the loves and joys of this world. That is why she was called Mitsu, which means "in retirement" and also "mystery." Since she had taken the vows, Hisamatsu could not marry her and he and O-Somé need no longer contemplate suicide.

Into this touching scene entered O-Somé's mother, O-Katsu. Her name had now its second meaning, "A Guard." She had followed her daughter from Osaka. O-Katsu declared that she had never believed Hisamatsu guilty of a theft and she would return the money that Kyusaku had sent her. She wanted the young man to go back with her and continue in her service at the oil-shop. That evening they went back to Osaka, the mother and the



happy lovers, while the faithful old Kyusaku and his unselfish daughter, O-Mitsu, watched them wistfully from the shore. As the boats disappeared down the river, the father and daughter waved their handkerchiefs and called, "Farewell, Hisamatsu! Fare you well, Honourable Miss O-Somé!"

But in the oil-shop at Osaka the stage was set for tragedy. No sooner had O-Somé returned from Nozaki than Sashiro's courtship was renewed, and his ardent proposals were assisted by his father's threats of what he would do to O-Katsu if she did not pay him the money she owed. The money she had expected to have was gone. She could not truthfully say that O-Somé was engaged to Hisamatsu, for the young clerk was so poor that it was not likely he would ever be able to marry. So finally to save herself from financial ruin, O-Katsu was compelled to promise her daughter O-Somé to Sashiro.

"Ha-ha!" said Kosuké to himself. "How well Sashiro has prospered by taking my advice. I must go and find him. It is time for him to make another thank-offering to the gods."

While Hisamatsu was bemoaning the sorry trick the gods had played on him, his faithful old nurse, O-Sho, came to see him. She was Kyusaku's sister, and when Hisamatsu's father died, it was she who had taken the orphan baby to his adopted home. The story is all told by the names. Sho, "the Very Beginning," took the child to live with Kyusaku, "Sudden Poverty." Hisamatsu's father had been a noble Samurai, but his name was Sagara, that is "Fallen in rank." His other name was Jodayu, "A

custodian," for his liege lord had entrusted to him the care of an ancestral treasure, a sword of the pious emperor Yoshimitsu. But the famous sword had been stolen and Hisamatsu's father had used the Samurai's privilege of committing harikari, or "happy dispatch," to save his family from the disgrace of having an ancestor who had been punished. O-Sho announced to Hisamatsu that after years of search she had found the long-lost Yoshimitsu blade. Now O-Sho revealed the other meaning of her name. It is "Reward." She told Hisamatsu that he could return the sword to its owner, the Prince of the Ishizu clan, and be restored to his father's estates and noble degree. The old woman persuaded Hisamatsu that it was his duty to go with her to the court and assume his ancestral position.

Soon Hisamatsu appeared ready for the journey. Instead of the humble cotton dress of an under-clerk he now wore the short hose of the Samurai, with two swords in his sash, and the badge of the Ishizu family embroidered on the sleeves and breast of his kimono. He did not seem the same person as the dejected youth who left the oil-shop before with Kosuké. O-Sho was so eager to have Hisamatsu reach the court that she hurried him off before he had a chance to announce his good fortune to his employer, or even to his sweetheart.

Night fell in Osaka. The black-clad property man lighted the Japanese lanterns and set them on sticks at each side of the stage and in the windows of the oil-shop. In a moment Hisamatsu returned. He could not sleep for thinking of O-Somé. He knew it was the duty he owed

to his ancestors to carry on the traditions of his family. But he had given his promise to little Somé and he could not live and be faithless to her.



*She came down into the courtyard.*

Now hearing footsteps in the dark yard, he stepped into the warehouse so as to be unobserved. It was the villainous Kosuké whom he had heard. The mercenary clerk was still plotting to separate the lovers and obtain a reward

tion in the wealthy suitor, Sashiro. He saw Hisamatsu come into the courtyard and saw him step inside the oil-house. The wicked Kosuké shut the warehouse door and locked Hisamatsu in.

O-Somé was dreaming of her lover when she waked suddenly with a feeling that some one was calling her. She came down into the courtyard. From the window in the oil house, Hisamatsu saw her in the light of the lantern she carried. "Is it you, dearest O-Somé?" he called.

O-Somé looked up and saw her lover. "Oh, Hisamatsu," she cried, "I cannot be your bride in this world, but if you will follow me, we shall be married in the next." And before Hisamatsu could even answer, the invisible property man gave her a dagger and she thrust it into her heart. Hisamatsu was overcome with grief, but he could not go down to her because he was locked in the oil-house. He unsheathed his Samurai's short sword and drove it into his side. In a moment the lovers had gone together to another world.



## X

### The Love of the Three Oranges

“Harlequin in magic poses;  
Columbine among the roses;  
Pantaloon in slippered ease is  
Laughing at Clown’s ancient wheezes  
In the summer, in the spring,  
In the sunshine, in the rain,  
Summon them and hear them cry—  
‘Here we are again.’”

From Granville Barker’s *Harlequinade*.



## The Love of the Three Oranges

HAD we been in Italy during the eighteenth century, we might have seen any of the popular plays of the day acted by the puppets in their little theatres.

In the poorer quarters of the cities, we would have had to make our way through crowded benches and be jostled by the good-natured gondoliers, venders, porters, and children, all in their holiday dress, and breathe the pungent odour of oranges in the thick atmosphere of the dark room. Or we might have attended a more fashionable and more expensive theatre where aristocratic fantoccini played for the amusement of elegant gentlemen, in powdered periwigs and velvet coats and satin breeches, and of ladies in stiff silks and jewels, powdered and patched and dominoed, who sniffed daintily at their pretty nosegays or scent-bottles while their cavalier servants danced attendance and held their fans or lace handkerchiefs for them.

And had we been in Venice, we might have seen the same types of people as those we saw in the audience appearing on the stage in one of Goldoni's comedies of social life, or we might have seen our old friend Pulcinella and his fellow buffoons performing with witches and wizards, magicians and fairies, in one of Carlo Gozzi's fables. Then we would have witnessed miraculous events in strange countries, for the masked puppets were just as likely to play their pranks at the court of the King of China, or in Persia, a thousand

years or so before their time, as they were to be in Venice in their own day.

And some evening at the puppet-show, when the orchestra had stopped playing and the green baize curtain had risen, when the fans had ceased their rustling and the gentlemen their compliments, the footlights would have shone on the ornate stucco throne-room in the palace of His Majesty, the King of Diamonds, and we should have seen all that happened night after night in that pink and sky-blue room and in front of the footlights too, where the spectators watched the play.

His Majesty, King Silvio, was monarch of the Card Table. His realm was small, but it was large enough for a puppet to rule and it provided plenty of responsibilities to worry the poor old King. When the play began, His Majesty was in earnest consultation with his confidential adviser, Pantaloon.

When the audience saw these two old men, with their white heads together, they applauded, for the game-loving ladies and gentlemen of the eighteenth century recognized Silvio at once, by the cups on his red, blue and yellow coat, as the supreme monarch of the cards, and his fat, masked companion in the rose-coloured pantaloons and the black skull cap and the robes of the ancient Venetian shopkeepers as their own jolly Pantaloon, who had been taking the part of the good-natured, trusting Papa in almost every Italian play for three hundred years.

The King wept as he told his faithful servant that the doctors had given up the life of his son and heir. The Crown Prince, Tartaglia, had been sick for ten years with

a mysterious malady. Pantaloon consigned all the doctors in Italy to the devil; but when his Majesty, King Silvio, reminded him that the Prince was certainly growing paler and weaker day by day, he could not deny the fact and heaved great fat sighs over the Prince's affliction.

The court physician, said the King, and all the famous doctors from Bologna, Padua, Pavia, and twenty other cities had declared that the Prince would die, unless he laughed soon. If he could be made to laugh he would be cured, but in all the time he had been ill, no one had been able even to make him smile. Then, whispering in Pantaloon's ear, so that he could not be heard by the soldiers, who stood at each corner of the stage, and the little pages in blue and silver and scarlet, who leaned against the elaborate vases on both sides of the throne, he confided in him that he simply could not bear the sight of his niece Clarice. "Alas," said he, "if the Prince should die, she would be next in line of succession!" and the King fell to bewailing the unhappy prospect of his good subjects with such a bad-tempered woman for their queen.

Pantaloon patted the royal shoulder and wiped away the royal tears with his huge red handkerchief and reminded King Silvio that with such a dismal papa, the Prince would never want to smile. "Let the court be merry," he said, "and full of festivities. While there is life there is hope. Perhaps Prince Tartaglia can yet be made to smile. I will send for my servant, Harlequin Truffaldino. His Highness is fond of him and the fellow is so humorous that no one could resist laughing at him, not even the sorrowful Prince."

The King was delighted with this idea and dispatched a guard at once to demand Truffaldino's presence at the court; His Majesty and Pantaloon began to plan all sorts of masquerades, tournaments, games, and spectacles in the hope of amusing the Prince.

When Leandro, the Prime Minister, entered, the audience knew he was the villain of the play, because he was dressed as the Knave of Diamonds, and, besides, Pantaloon remarked aside that he suspected this fellow of treachery to the royal house. The King commanded his Minister to arrange festivities, games, and feastings for the entertainment of the court and to offer a magnificent prize for the first one of his subjects who could make the Prince laugh.

The villain Leandro objected to this plan, making the feeble excuse that so much excitement might cause His Royal Highness' temperature to mount. But the King only repeated his order and retired in royal displeasure, stepping high like the aristocratic puppet that he was, with the two pages in silver and blue and scarlet who bore his train haughtily stepping high too. Pantaloon explained in a stage whisper to the audience that Leandro must be trying to kill the Prince; then he too departed, shuffling out of the room in his yellow turned-up slippers, with his black robe trailing behind. He left the baffled Prime Minister to face the handsome figure and the shrewish temper of the Princess Clarice, niece to the King.

Clarice could be heard scolding Leandro even before she appeared. She reproached him for his coldness; she reminded him that he had promised soon to marry her; that they would be king and queen when Tartaglia died; she

berated him because he did not kill the Prince at once and make her queen.

Leandro finally stemmed the torrent of words and asked her to remember that, if the means he had taken to insure Prince Tartaglia's death was slow, it was very sure. Said he, "You know that tablets of the present-day poets' verses are a deadly poison and any one to whom they are administered is sure to succumb." This remark made the gentlemen in the audience laugh very heartily indeed at the expense of the poets. Leandro boasted that the powerful fairy Morgana, who dwelt in the lake near the city, was his protectress and was helping him to kill Tartaglia. "And you know," he told the Princess, "that Morgana hates the King of Diamonds because she lost most of her possessions betting on that card. But the Knave of Diamonds has always been her lucky card and I, Leandro," striking his chest proudly, "am that Knave!"

But why was Truffaldino at court! The Princess Clarice screamed, so angry that the plumes shook on her headdress. The sight of that ridiculous old clown was enough to make any one laugh, even the melancholy prince.

The treacherous Prime Minister confessed that he too was uneasy about Truffaldino's appearance, but he explained that he had dispatched his lackey, Brighella, to ask Esmeraldina, the Moorish servant in the palace, why and how Truffaldino had come to the court. Esmeraldina was in Leandro's power. The fairy Morgana had bewitched her. "Ah, here comes the rascal now! We shall soon know all there is to know."

Scapino Brighella was a jaunty knave. He walked with

such a brave swagger that his green cape swung from side to side. He was wearing his fine white livery, all braided with green, and he wore his mask because he had been on a mysterious errand. He was a cautious fellow too, and he looked all around the stage, to see that no one was listening, and placed his finger on his lips before he reported to his master that he feared Truffaldino had been sent to court by a wizard named Celio. This was the opponent who, in the game with Morgana, had won the fairy's fortune, by taking a trick with the King of Diamonds. So Celio, of course, loved the King and was determined to protect the royal family from Morgana's vengeance.

Clarice and Leandro were chagrined. They decided they must kill Truffaldino at once before he could make the prince laugh, and fell to quarrelling over what poison would be best to use. Scapino Brighella tried to pacify them and informed them that the fairy Morgana herself was coming to attend the festivities which had been ordered for the Prince's benefit. Never fear, if he should laugh and be cured, she would be able to find some new curse to put upon him. This news made the Prime Minister feel better and he went off to order the banquet and festivities.

The second scene showed a chamber in the palace. In an enormous bed ornamented with fantastic scrolls and garlands and cupids, His Royal Highness, the poor pale Tartaglia, sat, all bolstered up, in a ridiculously large night-cap and a dressing-gown of red satin, with his great blue spectacles perched on his nose. Beside him stood a table piled with medicine bottles, glasses and spoons, and all the paraphernalia of a sick-room. The servant, Harlequin



Truffaldino, was busy about the room, puffing up the Prince's pillows, tossing them in the air two or three at a time, and catching them all before they fell. He balanced on the foot of the bed with his feet in the air while he offered a spoonful of medicine to the Prince, as no other servant but Harlequin ever could do. He turned a somersault with the glass in his hand and never spilled a drop of the Prince's tonic. This agile fellow in the suit of many colours flitted airily about the room in his master's service and, if a piece of furniture was in his way, the light-footed valet leaped over it in a flash. Tartaglia paid no attention to the antics of his talented servant, but went on talking to himself, telling all about his troubles in a weak, quavering voice and stuttering as he related a long list of his symptoms.

Then Truffaldino pretended he was a doctor and set out to make the melancholy Prince laugh. Feeling the patient's pulse, he declared that he felt the rhythm of classical verses. He looked down Tartaglia's throat, and made him stick out his tongue, and insisted there were verses trembling on it. He took the Prince's temperature and diagnosed his case and prescribed for it with so many learned expressions, and so many long words, and so many of them wrong, that the audience was convulsed with laughter; but the Prince Tartaglia only looked more and more melancholy as the fun grew greater and his solemnity, of course, made the audience laugh all the more. Finally Truffaldino, angered because his humour was ignored by Tartaglia, threw the medicine bottles out of the window and carried the Prince off to the court festivities, dressing-gown, night cap, spectacles, bed-



clothes and all, while the Prince stammered his indignant refusal to go.

When the curtain next rose the King and the sick Prince, who was all muffled up in a fur-trimmed pelisse, sat on a balcony which was decorated with streamers and with the coat of arms of the House of Diamonds, the cup rampant above the quartered coins and swords and clubs of the other Italian card suits. Beside the Prince sat the wicked Clarice, the good Pantaloon, and the usual guards and pages, while down in the court yard of the Palace the Prime Minister, Leandro, resplendent in a rose-coloured suit with puffs and slashes and ruffs and silver buttons, stood and read a lengthy proclamation to which the Prince paid not the least attention, for he was fast asleep.

The gates were opened and the populace streamed in, puppets of all sorts, rich and poor. There were foreign ambassadors with coloured ribbons across the breasts of their gaily coloured vests, soldiers with bright plumes on their hats and gay cloaks over their steel breastplates, self-important senators in fur-trimmed caps and full black robes, and beautiful ladies in stiff brocade and satin dresses with stomachers embroidered in pearls, and little pages to carry their long trains, and gorgeously dressed gentlemen as their escorts. There were peasants too, girls with bright-coloured handkerchiefs over their heads and gay dresses and aprons; and young men with rounded jackets and knickerbockers and striped stockings; in fact all sorts and conditions of puppets. One old woman was so ugly and shabby that Truffaldino did not want to admit her. But she announced aside that she was the Fairy Morgana come to wreak de-

struction on the House of Diamonds, and the wicked Prime Minister bowed low to her and insisted on her being made welcome.

Now the entertainment began. The Master of Ceremonies introduced each part of the festivities in an elaborate speech with elegant gestures and many bows and flourishes, while Harlequin Truffaldino insisted on interrupting and making fun of Leandro's grandiloquent language and affected manner.

All the poets of the realm were there with their verses written on long sheets of paper rolled and tied with gay coloured ribbons; but as soon as the first poet began to read his effusions, flattering the Prince and comparing him with the Greek gods and his brilliancy with that of the sun and moon and all the planets, the Prince Tartaglia grew very pale and would have fainted quite away, had not Harlequin Truffaldino snatched away the scroll, declaring that the rhymes were atrocious, the spelling abominable, and the meter lame, and driving all the poets away insulted.

Then a curtain at the side of the stage was drawn, and two pages placed a bench at a corner of the yard, with little clipped trees in boxes to make a sort of stage; and a number of court ladies dressed as shepherdesses, carrying crooks and wearing flowers in their hair, and several gentlemen, with plumed hats, performed a masque in praise of one Corydon, who, they said, was the noblest and most generous and the wisest shepherd in Arcadia, but they looked at Prince Tartaglia as they said it. However, their flattery did not make the sorrowful young Prince smile.

There was a tournament in which the combatants bur-

lesqued the encounters of mediæval knights and ran away from each other and pretended to die and fell head over heels and were very funny indeed. At the end of each joust, Harlequin Truffaldino would call up to the balcony and ask if the Prince had smiled yet. Each time he asked he grew more and more anxious and funny and the Prince grew more and more depressed, weeping and begging to be put back in his warm bed.

Truffaldino was passing jests with every one, but when he addressed a joking remark to the old woman, who was really the Fairy Morgana, she turned and hurled such venomous insults at him that he boxed her ears and sent her sprawling. The old woman landed on her head with her feet in the air and looked so funny and helpless while she cursed Truffaldino and waved her feet about that the Prince Tartaglia, up in the balcony, burst out laughing, and all the court began laughing too, and all the populace followed suit and laughed till they held their sides and the air was alive with shaking strings. But the Fairy Morgana raised herself from the ground and cursed Tartaglia. She called on the spirits of the rocks and the mountains, on the thunderbolts of heaven and the earthquakes, and on Pluto, the King of Hades, to curse the Prince Tartaglia with a thirst that could not be slaked, the love of the three oranges.

The old woman was gone; the Fairy Morgana stood shaking her fists and wagging her high pointed hat. Then striking the ground with her staff she vanished and the curtain fell on King Silvio's courtiers staring at each other in consternation.

Poor old Pantaloon was in great distress, so he told the

audience. The noble young Prince Tartaglia was determined to walk the world over to find the three oranges for which he so ardently longed, and he must have a pair of iron shoes that would not wear out as he walked the world over. The King had ordered Pantaloon, under pain of the royal displeasure, to find such a pair of shoes; he must go find them at once. So he left the stage.

The Prince, too, said he was impatient to start on his search. The three oranges, so his grandmother had told him, were two thousand miles away, guarded by the witch, Creonta. He was all ready for his adventure, dressed in a fine suit of armour. Without his glasses and with his health restored, Tartaglia was indeed a handsome Prince. Harlequin Truffaldino was ready for the journey too, dressed in a few odds and ends of armour that were much too large for him.

Before these two adventurers set out, there was a touching farewell between the Prince and his father. The King presented his son with the pair of iron shoes that he wanted; Truffaldino took them from the silver salver on which a page brought them in. King Silvio begged the Prince not to attempt this crazy search; but Tartaglia would not listen. He wept to leave his father, but he longed for the three oranges and the three oranges he must have. Harlequin Truffaldino wept too as he turned cart wheels off the stage after his master, while Pantaloon caught the tears of all four in his bright red handkerchief. After his son had gone, the King fainted on the sofa, and Pantaloon shouted for "aromatic vinegar."

When Cléo and Leandro found what all this hubbub

was about, they danced for joy. They were sure Tartaglia would never return alive and they began to make plans for the day when Clarice would be queen and Leandro king. But Clarice insisted that she was to be commander-in-chief of all the armies and hold every other office too, so she and Leandro quarrelled. Brighella wanted to be made Master of the Royal Revels; and all three of them disputed about what sort of plays they should have to amuse the court.

The next scene was a dreary wilderness. The wizard Celio was murmuring incantations; he drew a magic circle and summoned a spirit to his aid. "Farfarello," he cried, and a slim black imp with red horns and hoofs appeared. "What success has Truffaldino had at the court of the King of Diamonds?" asked the wizard, and Farfarello told all that had happened there and announced that the Prince Tartaglia and Harlequin Truffaldino would arrive at the Castle of Creonta, where the three oranges were kept, very soon, for his brother spirit had gone to help them on their way.

No sooner had the wizard and his sprite vanished than Tartaglia and his faithful squire came in. Literally, they blew in, for there was another black devil, just like Farfarello, after them with a bellows, which, of course, accounted for their covering two thousand miles in so short a time.

When these two travellers had recovered from the effects of "the terrible wind-storm" they had just been through, they consulted a large map that Harlequin carried in his pocket and decided from the countries, mountains, rivers and oceans they had passed and the adventures

they had had—all of which they recounted to the audience most humorously, while they covered the whole stage with their immense map—that they could not be far from the Castle of the Three Oranges. Tartaglia then spied a castle upon a distant hill and started for it. Truffaldino, who was suffering humorously from the pangs of hunger, decided that he smelt food and followed willingly, suggesting that they enter the castle by the kitchen door.

Just as they were about to leave the stage, the wizard Celio met them and tried in vain to induce the Prince not to attempt the adventure of the three oranges. Rolling his eyes in terror, he described the horrible dangers they would encounter: a rusty iron gate, a starving dog, a wet well-rope, a baker's wife whose back was bent double from sweeping her ovens without a broom. But as Tartaglia was determined, Celio finally offered to help him and gave the Prince a magic oil for the bolt of the gate, a loaf of bread for the dog, a bundle of brooms for the baker's wife, and told him to hang the wet rope to dry in the sun. He warned Tartaglia not to open the oranges unless there was water near and promised to send the same devil who blew them there to blow them home. Then Celio vanished and Tartaglia set off for the castle with Truffaldino carrying their newly acquired luggage.

Back at the court of the King of Diamonds, Clarice and Leandro were rejoicing at the supposed ill-fate of Prince Tartaglia, and the fairy Morgana was plotting to undo the good work of the wizard Celio. She bade the Moorish servant Esmeraldina, whom she had bewitched, follow her to the enchanted lake outside the city.



In the courtyard of Creonta's castle a rope hung in a well, an emaciated dog howled before a rusty iron gate, and a baker's wife swept her oven with her bare hands. Outside the gate appeared Tartaglia and Truffaldino. No one spoke, but the new-comers smeared the bolt with the oil and the gate swung on its hinges. When they entered the yard the dog attacked them, but they threw the bread to him. They hung the well-rope in a patch of sunlight to dry and they gave the brooms to the baker's weary wife. The Prince went into the castle and in a moment he came out, joyfully bearing the three oranges. Harlequin Truffaldino capered about the stage and turned cart wheels for joy.

Suddenly the sky darkened, thunder rolled and lightning flashed; Tartaglia gave the precious oranges to the trembling Truffaldino, whose cowardly knees were knocking together, and drew his sword. From the castle came a terrible voice, "Baker's wife, baker's wife, cast those two villains into thy fire!"

But the baker's wife only replied, "How many years, how many years, have I swept my ovens without brooms? Thou gavest me none. They gave them. Let them go in peace."

Again the witch shrieked: "Rope, rope, hang those knaves."

But the rope answered, "How many months, how many years, have I moulded in the well? They hung me in the sun. Let them go in peace."

Creonta screamed: "Watch-dog, watch-dog, tear those wretches limb from limb."

The dog growled, "How many weeks, how many months,



how many years, have I starved for want of food? These gave me bread. Let them go in peace."

"Iron gate, iron gate!" whined Creonta. "Close on the thieves and grind their bones to dust!"

And the gate squeaked: "How many days, how many weeks, how many months, how many years, have I rusted without oil? These oiled my bolts. Let them go in peace!"

Creonta uttered a terrible wail, and died, I suppose. Tartaglia and Truffaldino bowed low to the baker's wife, to the dog, the rope, and the gate, each in turn, thanked them for their assistance, and departed with their precious oranges.

On a stone bench near the edge of the Fairy Morgana's enchanted lake sat Esmeraldina, the Moorish woman, at the beginning of the third act. The Fairy Morgana rose from the water and prophesied that Truffaldino would soon arrive alone and a great thirst would attack him. She gave Esmeraldina two magic pins and bade her, when she saw a beautiful girl resting on the seat, to put one of them into the maiden's hair and then, if anything should happen to the maid, to take her place on the stone. The Prince Tartaglia would marry her and she was then to put the other pin in his hair so he would turn into a bird. Then Clarice and Leandro would be king and queen. Seeing Truffaldino coming, they withdrew.

Harlequin Truffaldino came in with the same devil assisting him that blew him on his way before. He wondered how soon the Prince would catch up with him. He wailed about his hunger. He sat down to rest and pretty

soon he stopped talking about food and began telling how thirsty he was. Then he took one of the three oranges out of his wallet and looked at it longingly. He smelled it, then pretended to suck it, then shook his head, put it back, and heaved a deep sigh. After amusing the audience for a while with this pantomime, he finally yielded to his thirst and peeled an orange. Out of the rind stepped a beautiful girl in an exquisite fluffy white dress.

"Give me to drink," she cried. "I thirst! Oh, I faint! I am dying," and she fell to the ground. Harlequin Truffaldino, being a fool, never thought of the lake. He pranced about in distraction and finally opened a second orange to give the poor girl a drink. Out of the second stepped another maiden in white, who was even more beautiful than the first. She too cried for a drink and fell fainting to the ground. Truffaldino wept over the lovely creatures and in distraction was just going to cut the third orange when he heard Tartaglia calling him. Harlequin tried to put the maidens back into the orange-skins, and when he found that he could not fit the rind together he tried to hide under the bench. But just then Tartaglia appeared and dragged him out by his heels. When the Prince saw the tragedies which his foolish servant had caused, he flew into a rage and Truffaldino trembled so violently that he dropped the third orange on the ground. While Tartaglia bewailed the fate of the two beautiful damsels, the orange began to swell. Larger and larger it grew until it was as tall as Tartaglia. When the Prince had recovered from his surprise, he took his sword and cut the rind. Out stepped a third lovely maiden in a dress of white gossamer





lace, who begged, as had the other two lovely damsels, for a drink.

The Prince understood now why the witch Celio had warned him not to open the oranges except near a water supply. He ran to the lake and brought a drink in one of his iron shoes. On bended knees he offered it, with humble apologies for having no better goblet. The maiden gratefully accepted the queer cup and, when she had drunk from the shoe, she regained her strength and stood tall and graceful beside the handsome Prince.

He begged to know her name.

"I am Ninetta," she said, "daughter of Concul, King of the Antipodes. The wicked Creonta imprisoned me and my two sisters inside the magic oranges."

Tartaglia fell on his knees and asked the Princess to share his throne with him. After some persuasion and much impassioned gesture and stammering on Tartaglia's part, Ninetta finally accepted his offer of marriage. That settled, the Prince bade her wait on the stone seat under the tree while he went to summon the court and prepare a suitable entrance into the city for his bride. With many sighs and vows of eternal faithfulness, the young lovers, who were about to be separated for a few minutes, said farewell to each other.

No sooner had Tartaglia gone than Esmeraldina came out from behind the tree where she had been watching the scene. She began to flatter the princess Ninetta. She admired her beautiful white costume, her exquisite complexion, her wonderful hair. It was too bad that it was not dressed to enhance such delicate beauty. She herself was a waiting

maid at the court of the King of Diamonds; might she not arrange the beautiful lady's locks a little more elegantly? The Princess graciously consented and Esmeraldina took the opportunity to stick one of the magic pins into Ninetta's head. The beautiful Princess, so lately freed from one spell of enchantment, was immediately transformed by another into a white dove that fluttered about the stage and flew away. The swarthy Esmeraldina, very well pleased with herself, sat down in Ninetta's place, spread out her dress, arranged her cap, and folded her hands to wait for Tartaglia's coming.

The trumpets blew, the band played, and in marched the King of Diamonds, with the expectant Prince Tartaglia and the Princess Clarice, the Prime Minister Leandro, the faithful old Pantaloon, the wily Brighella, and all the rest of the Court. When Tartaglia saw the black Moorish woman in Ninetta's place, he was amazed, and furious too. Esmeraldina insisted she was the Princess Ninetta, and that the Prince Tartaglia had promised to marry her, even repeating his very words. Tartaglia protested and raged and stuttered his denials; but the King solemnly reminded his son that a promise given by a Prince must be kept. The band struck up the wedding march and the pompous King led off, followed by the smiling bride on her weeping groom's arm. Leandro and Clarice brought up the rear rejoicing and Scapino Brighella laughed till he had to lean against a tree.

In the royal kitchen the nuptial banquet was being prepared by Harlequin Truffaldino, dressed in a cook's white cap and apron. While he was turning the spit on which the



meat was roasting, a white dove lighted on the window-sill.

"Good morning, cook of the kitchen," said the dove.

"Good morning, white dove," politely responded the astonished cook.

"I pray Heaven that you may fall asleep, that the roast may burn up so that the hideous Moor may never eat it," said the dove and then disappeared. Truffaldino began to nod as he turned the spit; finally he fell asleep and snored loudly. The roast was burned to a cinder.

When the tired cook woke up, his consternation was pitiful. He put another piece of meat on the spit and the same scene was repeated. The dove appeared, expressed the same wish, slumber overcame Truffaldino, and the second roast burned to a crisp.

The bewildered cook placed a third joint before the fire. Again the dove appeared and repeated the strange wish. Harlequin Truffaldino's efforts to keep awake were laughable. But soon he began to nod and the flames devoured the third roast.

In bustling Pantaloon, scolding because the meat had not appeared. The soup was eaten, the sausages and liver too, he said, but the royal roast was missing. The King was furious! Truffaldino told the story of the dove. "Nonsense," said Pantaloon, "the lazy fellow dreamed it." But just then the dove returned and repeated her strange remarks. Truffaldino immediately dozed off; but Pantaloon roused him and they both chased the dove about the kitchen. Although they hit the ceiling with their heads, as they jumped about as only puppets can jump, the bird eluded them. Finally, when they had ceased trying to



catch it and called it gently, it lighted on the table and allowed them to stroke its feathers. Pantaloon discovered a pin in the dove's head. Truffaldino drew it out and there stood the Princess Ninetta.

In came his Majesty the King of Diamonds and rebuked Harlequin Truffaldino because the royal guests were kept waiting for their roast meat. The Prince followed him and beheld his beautiful Ninetta. Joyful explanations followed and the whole court crowded into the kitchen to congratulate the happy young couple. The King made his throne upon the hearth and proceeded to straighten out the tangled affairs of his household.

"What," he inquired, "would be suitable penalty for those subjects who plotted against the Prince?" Various punishments were suggested by the courtiers. "Boil them in oil!" shouted one. "No, they deserve to be hanged, drawn and quartered," cried another. A third suggested casting the traitors to the lions as an appropriate return for such disloyal behaviour.

"Let them be banished," said both Leandro and Clarice, undoubtedly thinking that would be a lucky escape for them.

"Let them be burned in the flames," suggested Esmeraldina, to the surprise of every one. So the King ordered the Prime Minister and his wicked niece to be exiled from the realm and the Moorish woman to be thrown into the flames, and the entire court cheered the decision.

Just then the wizard Celio appeared and announced that Esmeraldina was not to blame for her evil deeds. She had been bewitched by the Fairy Morgana. He waved his wand

over her and commanded her to assume her former shape. There was a flash of lightning and the wizard disappeared. Esmeraldina also was gone, and where she had stood was Columbine in her best white ballet dress with the pink silk stockings and ribbons.

When Harlequin saw Columbine, he took off his cook's apron and took up his wand and waved her about the stage as if she were a butterfly in his net. In and out went Columbine among the wedding guests, swaying this way and that like a top, over and under the furniture as if she were a fairy, while Harlequin, dancing lightly as a feather, led her about at the end of his magic wand. He flashed around the stage like a drop of quicksilver and she flickered in and out like a firefly. He leaped, she skimmed; he flew, she flitted. He advanced, she retreated; he pursued, she fled. Finally he turned away dejected and dropped his wand, and then she came running to him on her pretty little toes and clasped her hands over his eyes, and he caught her in his arms and tossed her into the air. She floated to the floor like a snowflake and he whirled her around by her fingertips. They would have danced together like that forever if the royal orchestra had not stopped playing.

The King joined the hands of the Prince and Princess and ordered the Court Minister to perform the marriage ceremony at once; and there was a sumptuous banquet, in which, of course, there was no meat dish larger than the stewed mouse which Harlequin Truffaldino brought in on a gold platter held high above his head. There was fried goldfish too, and preserved radishes for the salad course, and candied currants for dessert; and each guest was served

with the juice of a single grape in a goblet exactly like the cups that mark the suit of Diamonds on the Italian playing cards, and the whole court drank to the health of the happy couple.

So they were married, Tartaglia and his Ninetta, and Harlequin married Columbine, and they all lived happily ever afterwards.

# XI

Harlequin's Company

—“Nimble Sir Harlequin,  
My lord Pantaloon, Signore Punchinello,  
Magnificent Scaramouche—enter your Kingdom!

—“Behold it before you! Within there, the table  
Of Fortune is spread for us, served by her handmaids.—  
Miming Romance, seductive Adventure,  
Amorous Magic—improvised Comedy,  
And all the love-charming, blood-thirsting Enchantments  
Our prosy old workaday world has lost wind of.”

From Percy Mackaye's *A Thousand Years Ago*.

## Harlequin's Company

EVERY ONE in that eighteenth century audience knew the story of *The Love of the Three Oranges* before the curtain rose. The puppets had chosen this play to appear in, because it had been so successful when human actors presented it. But even to the Venetian ladies and gentlemen who attended at the first night when a troupe of Italian comedians presented *The Love of the Three Oranges*, the tale of Tartaglia's quest was not new. They knew King Silvio, the dainty Princess Ninetta and the fairy Morgana well, for the story of the longing for oranges was one of those old tales that were told before the shepherd people herded their flocks out of Asia, and that wandering into the western countries, were retold by the grandmothers of Europe to their grandchildren. Although the people in this Venetian audience realized before they went to the play that they were going to see old friends, they were surprised to find Harlequin Truffaldino, simple old Pantaloon, the wily Scapino Brighella and pretty Columbine in the play. These four characters were old friends too, but they had never been in the tale when the Venetians had heard it in their childhood.

Who then were these four welcome interlopers in the play? Where did they come from? No one knows exactly, they had been actors so long. The fathers and

grandfathers of these Venetians had applauded their antics in the comedies of masks, where Scaramouch and Punch learned their trade.

One day a company of these masked players left the land where every one had known them so long and so well that their gate receipts were growing low, and set out to seek their fortunes across the seas. But, meeting disaster on the way, they returned to Italy and were stranded in Venice. The chief comedian and manager of the company, Sacchi, made an appeal for aid to the playwright Carlo Gozzi, who was known as a friend of the merry Carnival characters and of puppets and all other good things in the drama. It was to rescue this company in their distress that Carlo Gozzi made a play of the old nursery tale about the oranges. The first night brought a crowded house and Sacchi's company was relieved from poverty.

The manager played the part of Harlequin Truffaldino. He was so fine an actor that Carlo Gozzi did not compose any lines for him but stopped the dialogue when he came to Truffaldino's part and wrote, "Truffaldino enters, makes a few remarks about the situation, and goes out." The head comedian was to act as he pleased and say what he thought best.

A player who could make up his own part and compose his own speeches must have been an exceptional actor indeed. When we realize that this is the way all the masked comedies were performed, we can understand how Harlequin and his troupe of players made their names and their day distinctive in the story of the drama.

It was the time that was made glorious in England by



Shakespeare and his fellows. The lines the English actors spoke are still preserved in print; but what their Italian contemporaries said, no one knows. Just how the stories were told and what the lovers said to each other, what scandalous tales the villain spread and what humorous mistakes the clown made, we can only guess, for the plays were never written down.

All that the author planned was the plot of the story and a plat of the action, like the scenario of a motion picture play. A scene was written like this one, which began "The Broken Contracts."

"Leghorn." [This meant the place in Tuscany where the action was supposed to take place.]

"BRIGHELLA enters the stage, sees no one and calls.

PANTALOOON enters, simulates fear.

BRIGHELLA wants to leave his service.

PANTALOOON recominends himself to him.

BRIGHELLA is touched, and promises his assistance.

PANTALOOON says that his creditors demand payment, especially TRUFFALDINO, and that this is the last day allowed him, etc." [Etc. means that he tells all his other troubles.]

"BRIGHELLA pacifies him.

At this moment:

TRUFFALDINO, Scene in which he demands payment.

BRIGHELLA finds a way to fend him off.

PANTALOOON and BRIGHELLA remain.

At this moment:

TARTAGLIA at the window, listens.

BRIGHELLA perceives this. Plays a scene with PANTALOOON pretending wealth.

TARTAGLIA comes down into the street to pretend to beg alms of PANTALOOON."

Carlo Gozzi copied this scenario behind the scenes. The plot of the play was always posted in the wings and the actors followed it, but they enlarged the theme at rehearsals and made up their speeches as they went along. The player who took the part of Brighella must think for himself how to soothe the feelings of Pantaloon and make the old man stop complaining about his financial troubles, how to put off Truffaldino when that worthy demanded immediate payment from his master, and how to convince Tartaglia, in hiding behind the window, that Pantaloon had grown suddenly wealthy. One actor took up the story of the play where another dropped it and the ball of conversation was tossed back and forth among the quick-witted players. This method of writing a play made the actors very expert at improvising bits of action and dialogue and caused the unexpected and amusing incidents and the spontaneous gaiety that gave the improvised comedies their charm. Even when the plots were the same, an ingenious actor could always keep the audience amused with quick-witted answers and clever pantomime.

When the rehearsal of a play was begun, the Head Comedian would explain the story to his company. His method, as an Italian writer, Andrea Perucci, described it, was like this.

“‘The comedy which is to be acted is so and so, the persons are so and so.’ Then he shall mention the houses, indicating them in this way, first those on the right hand side, then those on the left, then in the background. The actors are enjoined to notice well where the scene is laid, so that one of them may not speak as if he were in Rome, when another had just mentioned the

place as Naples, or that he who has been said to have come from Spain may not announce that he comes from Germany. They shall also pay close attention to the houses, and know where their own homes are, so that they do not run into the wrong house, which always looks ridiculous. Nor is it well if a father cannot remember the name of his son, or a lover that of his beloved one."

It was not even necessary to assign the parts when a new play was rehearsed, for although the scenarios changed with each new production, the characters were always the same, and an actor always appeared in the same rôle. Thus each player naturally became closely identified with the part he played, and Italian actors were known as Harlequins, or Brighellas, instead of by their own names. During the three hundred years in which the Comedy of Art flourished, many different actors played each one of those parts and every player added new humours and qualities to the character, which his successors adopted as part of the rôle.

Now when you have actors with such long practice in a single part that they know to perfection their trade of being a hero, or a villain, or a lady's maid, or valet, or whatever rôle they play, and they know just how to act and what to say in any emergency they are likely to meet, it does not take much else to make a good play. The plots of the Italian plays were very simple and always much the same. They were usually founded on intrigues and cases of mistaken identity. There were sons who were kidnapped in their childhood by the Turks and who returned so grown up and handsome that their own parents did not recognize them. There were a father and son, or two friends, in love

with the same girl and each one thinking the other in love with another lady. At such misunderstandings as these, the audience was furnished with a great deal of amusement.

As the scenery for the Italian comedy was built like a city square, with three streets meeting at the front of the stage, the audience could see the actors in all the streets and so a great many misunderstandings, that developed because people in different streets could not see each other, were understood by the audience out in front. The streets were lined with houses, in which the characters in the plays were supposed to live, and here Brighella could hide behind doors to overhear conversations and more daring villains could lurk around the corner and watch a chance to set upon some innocent passer-by. Neighbours could spy upon neighbours across the way and the servants could report the latest gossip from window to window. The buildings were really nothing more than narrow walls with practical doors and windows, but they were solidly built so Harlequin could climb in and out of the second story windows and Pulcinella could escape to the roof. The action of the plays took place in the houses as well as in the streets, and the audience saw the people in their homes through the open windows.

There was always a love story in the play; but except that they were in love and always very fashionably attired, the lovers were not very interesting people. This perhaps was because they came from Tuscany, the home of the written comedies, where the actors spoke the lines that the poets wrote for them and so were not so experienced at improvising as the peasant masks were. The gentleman adorer was usually called Leandro or Lelio, and his lady-

love was Isabel. But in the play we have just seen she was called Clarice; that was because these two were the villains and the parts of the good sweethearts were given to Tartaglia and Ninetta. In a love story, as we know, the course of true love must not run smoothly until the last act, and there must be a rival, an obdurate parent or two, a confidant for each lover, some one to carry messages, and some one to make a few blunders. These rôles were all filled by the Italian comedy players, under one name or another. They had the same title in most of the plays, but even when their names were different, their characters were the same.

Pantaloon usually took the part of the guardian. He was not always the father; sometimes he was a bachelor uncle or a faithful friend of the family, as he was in King Silvio's household. He had a great many other titles, and was called at times Ubaldo, Pandolfo, Oronte, Geronte, or Graziano. But the favourite name for him was Pantaloon. No, he was not named for the trousers he wore; they were named for him. In his younger days he dressed in the red hose and black cloak of the Venetian merchants, but after the republic of Venice lost Eubœa to the Turks, he always wore mourning. It is said that Pantaloon was named for Saint Pantalcone, the patron saint of the great maritime city.

There is a story, too, that Pantaloon acquired his title in foreign trade. The merchants of old Venice planted the banner bearing the lion of Saint Mark on every Mediterranean island that they could, in order to secure lands in the name of the Republic. They were so boastful of their

conquests that their fellow citizens gave them the name, Pianta-leone, or "plant-the-lion."

Like all the Venetian shop-keepers, Pantaloon was very close in money matters. Yet he was always being cheated, especially by Harlequin or by his servant, Zacometo, and when he discovered the deception he would fly into a furious rage, which was especially delightful to see because Pantaloon was usually so good-natured. The old man did not always appear as a tradesman; sometimes he acted the part of a physician, or a lawyer, or a learned doctor from the university town of Bologna. Then he would use a great many long words and always get them wrong, with medical and legal terms hopelessly mixed together. His Latin quotations, too, were always misquoted and inappropriate. He practised medicine under the name of Dr. Graziano; but the only person he ever cured was Pulcinella, who could not die anyway, being immortal. But whatever trade he followed, Pantaloon was always absent-minded and he never saw the notes the lovers sent each other right under his nose.

The servants who carried these messages were the most prominent characters in the plays. They were the same people who, even to-day, when the curtain rises, are discovered cleaning up their masters' rooms, "dusting away yesterday's cares to make room for the cares of to-morrow," making witty remarks and telling each other their employers' troubles, so that the audience will feel acquainted with the masters and mistresses when they finally appear on the scene. For my part I would prefer a servant a little less talented at amusing people and cheating them and a little more trustworthy than the valets and maids in the Comedy



of Art, but their employers seemed to trust them implicitly and confided in them all their love affairs and escapades and their ambitious schemes. The servant clowns in the Italian plays were called the Zanies. This was a name like Jack; it was short for Giovanni, the Italian John.

Two of these fellows were always entertaining as they went about their master's affairs, the light-hearted Harlequin in his patched suit, and the scheming humbug, Brighella. They were always playing tricks, always thieving, and always hungry, though that was odd, for they were always lunching. Harlequin and Brighella sharpened their wits on each other. They were at their best together, and they had always been together from the time when they were boys in Bergamo. Brighella was the most useful to his master, especially when villainy was afoot, for he was a clever knave. His name meant an intriguer. In France, he was called Scapin from the word that means to escape. Harlequin was not a real knave like Brighella. He was only mischievous; he was really a simple, trustful fellow and Brighella was always taking advantage of that fact. Harlequin was very accomplished at acquiring news. He flitted from one keyhole to another, for Harlequin could be everywhere at once, so light on his feet was he, and his quick movements and his flashing spotted suit make him seem more like the sprite Ariel, than a human servant.

How this light-footed valet got his many-coloured suit is all explained in an old Italian legend. It happened when he was a little boy and lived in Bergamo. Harlequin's sweet nature and merry disposition endeared him to his playmates; but alas, the love of his fellows was all the



wealth he had. When carnival time came and every one prepared for the last revel before they said farewell to flesh for forty days, Harlequin announced that he was too poor to buy a motley suit. But each one of his friends offered a piece of cloth from his own masquerade dress to make a suit for Harlequin, so they might have his welcome company in the joyous celebration. But when the costume was all ready to be fitted the generous Bergamask boys found to their chagrin that each one of them had given a piece of cloth that was different in colour and fabric from the rest, and Harlequin's suit would have to be a patchwork of as many hues and materials as Joseph's coat. Yet Harlequin was delighted with it and wore it always after that.

Columbine usually took the part of the maidservant, although frequently the female servant was a scheming old woman called Pasquella. Columbine was often under some spell of enchantment or another and sometimes appeared disguised as a Moorish woman or a Spaniard. But she always returned to her own charming self, before the play ended, and married the Harlequin she had always loved. Pantaloon wanted Columbine to accept some rich suitor, instead of a fellow with patches on his clothes like Harlequin.

Columbine was not always a servant; often she appeared as a lady. In the *Love of the Three Oranges*, she really played a double part, for Ninetta was a Columbine too. We should have known that as soon as we saw her changed into a dove, for Columbine's name means a little dove. There was always a mystery about this dainty maid, which she inherited perhaps from the ancient days when the

presences of the ladies were called doves, like Columbine.

In France, Columbine is called Pierrette; that is because the Prince Clown, Pierrot, loves her. But Pierrette always runs away with Harlequin and the pallid Pierrot cannot detain her, for his hands are quite useless, hidden as they are, in his great long sleeves. In Italy Pierrot was Pantalino. He was the Doctor's servant. But he did not wear a mask; he whitened his face instead.

Tarraglia did not cover his face with a mask either. His great round blue spectacles were disguise enough. They made his hollow checked face look sicker than ever, but his green suit, striped around with yellow, made his body look very plump. His name Tarraglia, "the stutterer," was well earned. He stammered so hard that, although he dearly loved to gossip, he never could relate the stories he heard about people without getting furiously angry. His tongue would not tell the news before he forgot it, for Tarraglia, besides being a stutterer, was an absent minded chap.

Tarraglia did not usually hold so high an office as that of Crown Prince, to which Carlo Gozzi had promoted him. He was the Notary who married the lovers and drew up Pantalino's will, or the Apothecary who prescribed for the old coach ill, or the Constable who arrested Punch. When he played the officer's part, he disguised himself with an enormous buty tremendous mustachios and a card-board nose, wrapped himself up from his eyes to his immense feet in a great cloak, and buckled on a huge sword. This whole costume was made in one piece and hung on a hook behind the scenes so he could put it on quickly and

surprise people. He lurked in the shadows so thieves could not see him watching them, but he made enough noise with his boots to wake the dead. Brighella feared him and Harlequin fled from him, while the innocent Pierrot ran away when he appeared. Pulcinella was the only masked actor who was not afraid of the Constable. He knew him too well, for Tartaglia came from Naples and stammered in the same dialect that Pulcinella cackled.

Scaramouch too had been Pulcinella's friend in Naples. He stopped wearing his mask so that his whitened face would look livid against his sombre black suit and show the audience that he was a coward. He ran away every time Pulcinella threatened him, and then boasted afterwards about what he would do to his friend the next time that cowardly fellow tried to bully him. He was always telling how brave he was. His very name was war-like. It meant a skirmish. He bragged also of his wealth and pretended to be as rich as Cræsus, though no one ever saw him spend any money. He claimed to be a prince of several countries that no one ever heard of, and boasted that he traced his ancestry straight back to Julius Cæsar.

The Captain was said to be the father of Scaramouch and the father was as great a braggart as the son. This conceited fellow thought that all ladies were in love with him, because they smiled whenever they saw him. It would make any one smile to see him swagger about the stage, with his mustachios bristling over his huge ruff, and hear him tell what he had done and would do with his huge sword, which, he said, had also an illustrious history, "forged by Vulcan for Xerxes and descended through Cyrus, Darius, Alexan-

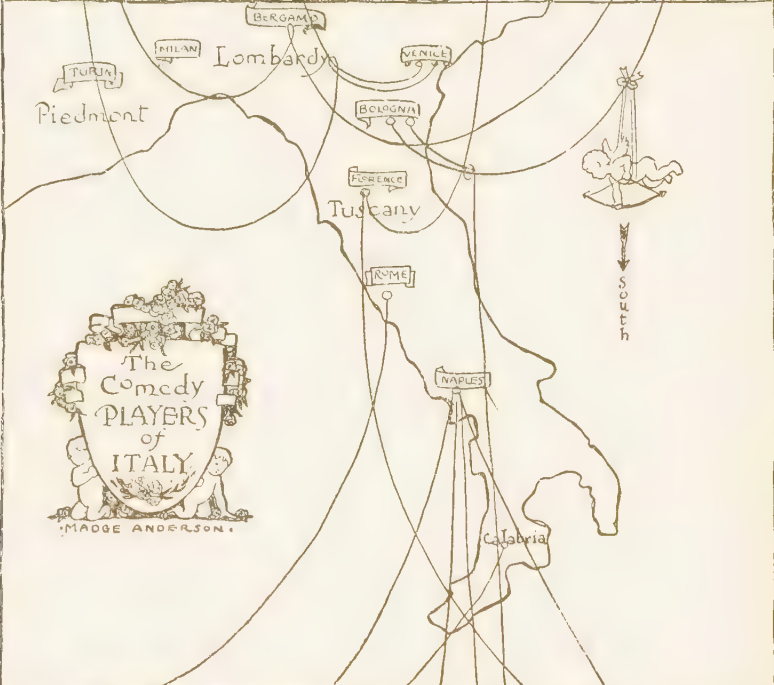
der the Great, Romulus, Tarquinius, the Roman Senate and Cæsar to myself, Captain Matamaros."

This son of Mars acquired his swagger and his gorgeous uniform from the hated soldiers who infested Italy under the Spanish dominion. Whenever he was attacked, the Captain took to his heels, but, as soon as the danger was over, he straightened his great plumed hat and continued his boasts. When Pantaloon drew his pistols, the Captain ran away and explained afterwards that he went to order a tomb for the old man before he killed him. When he was actually forced into a fight, he was so frightened that he shut his eyes, but he said that he closed them so that he could not see his enemies bleed.

Among all this company, Harlequin was the chief actor. In Venice he went under the name of Truffaldino, because he was a crafty little fellow; but in the early days he was known as Trivelino and was quite guileless and dressed in rags and irregular spots, instead of Harlequin's regular checkers and lozenge-shaped patches. Later in his prosperous days Trivelino wore a costume that was more elegant than any other Harlequin's. He had suns and moons and triangles sewed on his suit. But whether he went under his own name or that of Truffaldino or Trivelino, Harlequin always wore the rabbit's tail on his cap, and the same colours in his costume, and the same black mask.

The Italians said that the red in his suit stood for his temper, the yellow for his jealousy, the blue for his love of Columbine, and the black or brown for his constancy to her. The first two qualities were more highly regarded in Italy than they are in the northern countries.

Donomatto. F. D. H. L. A. P. A. C. A. V. L. L. A. B. e. l. a. n. d. L. e. a. n. d. r. o. C. o. l. u. m. b. i. n. e. & H. A. R. L. E. Q. U. I. N. R. e. d. o. l. i. n. o.



CASSANDRINO. Scaramouch. Coviello. The CAPTAIN. Taraglia. The Apothecary. Stenterello. PULCINELLA.



Others say that the red in his costume symbolizes fire; the blue, water; the yellow, air; and the black, earth. These were the elements that Mercury controlled and, it is sometimes said, Harlequin was descended from the god of thieves. Like Mercury, Harlequin was a servant employed as a messenger; like Mercury, he could become invisible at will—he had only to put on his hat—and, like Mercury, he had winged feet. If he pointed his wand at you he could make you do exactly what he willed. His picture was painted on the old Greek vases, posed with Charon and Psyche. They were grouped exactly as the actors stood in the Italian pantomimes—Harlequin, the messenger of the gods, with winged feet; Pantaloon, the old sea-profitier, collecting his price for a passage to the other world; and Columbine, the soul, always running away from some one, always seeking to be free.

Other writers assert that Harlequin was descended from the Greek god Pan and that his spotted costume was made in imitation of the god's goat skin. The pantomime actors of Greece and Rome who danced in the processions at the festivals of Bacchus were dressed in the shaggy skins of beasts to look like satyrs, and each mime carried a crooked staff, which Harlequin may have changed into a wand when he stopped being a shepherd and became a magician. Punch changed his staff to a stick too, and it was quite as persuasive as Harlequin's bat, though in a different way.

Among the Atellan players of Rome, there were actors like most of Harlequin's companions. Besides Maccus, there was Pappus, or Casnar, the Pantaloon, and Citeria, who was as beautiful as Columbine. The Sanniones, as

the Romans called the clowns, perhaps gave their name to the Zanies, Harlequin and Brighella. These masked players may have been ancestors of the Italian Comedy of Art. For a time after the ruinous visits of the barbarians from the North, their footsteps cannot be traced, but hundreds of years later the masked types of Italy appeared. To be sure the characters had different costumes and different names. Their masks now covered only part of their faces and their manners were quite altered to suit the new times.

How these merry players could have survived the early Christian persecutions of comedies, or where they could have hidden themselves during the Church's encouragement of the miracle and morality plays, no one knows. But the fact that one of the Zanies had acquired the name of Harlequin may explain what they were doing, for Harlequin comes from Hellekin, a troop from hell, and folks from that place were constantly prancing about in the religious dramas, making fun of every one on the stage and in the audience too.

Perhaps the Italian masks were only rustics who had never been to Rome, but merely adopted the mocking ways of the Roman actors when they too had grown famous and had taken their place on the stage of dramatic history.

Harlequin and his fellows played in their native villages and toured the neighbouring towns with mountebanks, attracting crowds so the charlatans could sell their quack medicines. At first the famous characters did not act together, each one of the different masks was a star on his own home stage, but gradually they became companies of strolling players. Yet each actor continued to speak the native dialect he



jabbered so glibly. Scaramouch and Pulcinella mumbled their words like true Neapolitans. Tartaglia stuttered as if his mouth were full of m's and n's. Harlequin and Brighella, the Bergamask twins, jested in the rude tongue of their home country, while Pantaloon held forth in soft Venetian whispers.

Through all the darkest time in Italian history, in the days when invasion and oppression made life a tragedy, and through the horrors and sorrows of the great plague, the joyous masked players kept the spark of comedy alive to light the fire of the drama when better days came.

It was not until the sixteenth century that the Harlequin players gained their fame, and before the eighteenth century was over they had lost it. In time the plays became too conventional. The lovers' declarations of love, the heroine's tale of distress and the friends' assurance of loyalty were given in stereotyped speeches with traditional gestures. As long as the actors were bright and original, crowds came to see the improvised plays; but when new comedies were written with new, clever lines, the Comedy of Art declined in popularity.

The Venetian playwright, Carlo Goldoni, was the leader in the movement against these masked actors. But he could not really keep them out of his works, for no one can ever write a play without a pair of lovers, a doting father and trusted message-bearers. And as a matter of fact the Italian comedy types have been appearing in plays ever since; but they no longer wear masks and they have forgotten many of the artful tricks they once knew. In Goldoni's plays the masked characters appeared under other names, and they

had less important rôles than the parts they had played in the fanciful comedies of masks, and the characters of the lovers were more vividly painted than the wooden sweet-hearts in the Comedy of Art. As the other parts grew more lifelike, the masks, who had never been subordinate as servants should be, faded into the background where they could not interrupt the realistic love stories with their ancient jokes.

But Carlo Gozzi, coming to the rescue of Sacchi's company with *The Love of the Three Oranges*, took up the glove that Goldoni had thrown down. He showed that it was not the old masked buffoons that bored the audiences, but the worn-out plays. All the venerable jesters needed to be interesting was a change of scene and new adventures. So he sent them off to fairy-land and into the countries of the *Arabian Nights*. In *Turandot*, the four masked jesters went trooping off to China and in *The Little Fair Green Bird*, the children of Tartaglia and Ninetta took the place of their parents.

When Sacchi's troupe of players dispersed, the last of Harlequin's great companies disappeared. The masks fell into the disgrace of poverty. There were no more laughs for Tartaglia, no more hand-claps for Harlequin, no more flowers for Columbine, and no money paid at the door for Pantaloon. The Comedy of Art was on the town.

As the door of the larger theatre closed on the tattered backs of Harlequin and his ragged company, they found the doors of the little theatre wide open in welcome; and Pantaloon, Columbine, Harlequin and their friends took refuge there. In the eighteenth century the wooden actors

were entering upon their greatest success. And so the puppets, who never can be so dull as living players can, continued to wear the comic masks. The puppet showmen were not slow to revive the scenarios which had proved popular in the larger theatre. All the clever things the Comedy of Art players had worked into their parts the puppets did at the pull of the showman's strings, and their speeches were improvised by the guardian behind the scenes.

Some of the Carnival characters adopted new names and costumes when they changed their size, but at heart they remained the same jolly fellows.

In Rome the puppet Pantaloon was called Cassandrino, that is little Cassandro. In spite of his advanced years, he dressed and acted like the young fops of his day. The Romans recognized in him a perfect caricature of the old "young" men who attended on the court of the Pope, waiting promotion to a cardinal's red hat. Cassandrino fell in love with every lady he met. In one of his most amusing plays he went sighing about the stage like a love-lorn youth, because he could find no way to make the acquaintance of a young lady whose charms had affected his susceptible heart at a distance. He decided to take lessons in painting from the adored one's brother. But his artistic studies had not advanced very far before he was driven from his easel by the attentions of his loved one's aunt, whom Cassandrino had courted in his youthful days. He escaped to the studio and there the pupils treated the old gallant to every sort of jesting indignity they could devise and the master painter threatened him with a palette-knife. He was compelled to marry the aunt instead of the niece. So Cassan-

drino retired from the clerical life and gave up all hope of ever wearing a Cardinal's red hat.

An old man named Facanappa was the leading marionette in Venice. He assumed the management of the stage and his name was always headlined on the bills, "Harlequin the Bankrupt, with Facanappa," or "Pantaloon the grocer, with Facanappa." At the end of the play he announced the performance for the next day, always "with Facanappa."

In Bologna the old man puppet was called Tabarino. He was named for the loose cloak actors wore. Tabarino had a huge flexible hat, which he could bend into all sorts of shapes, and he loved to record the remarkable biography of this "venerable and wonderful cap." He claimed that it was worn by the gods, Mercury and Janus, and was handed down in his family for many generations. Saturn first presented it to an ancestor of Tabarino's. And it was from this hat that the inventor of the parasol received his idea. Though he pretended to be very learned, Tabarino was really extremely ignorant; he began all his remarks in high-sounding Italian, but before he was half through a sentence, he gave up and ended it in the dialect of Bologna.

When Tabarino was a real player, he was called Coviello and was one of the seven masks of the Comedy of Art. This part was played by Burattino, who gave his name to the puppets. In the marionettes, Coviello wore three red feathers on his black hat and had his doublet slashed with red. He had also the great gloves and the boots that sounded like cannons and the bristling mustachios of the Captain.

The soldier of the puppet stage was sometimes a Captain,

sometimes a General and again only a Corporal, but he was always a swaggering boaster. In Rome he was Captain Rogantino. He bragged of what he would do to any one who dared molest him, and when he was beaten, he boasted of what he would do next time. Once when he emerged half dead from a fight, he cried: "They have beaten me, but I told them what I thought of them." In Bologna Rogantino was a Corporal, and the Corporal was even fiercer than the Captain. He rolled his r's in a terrifying manner, when he threatened what he would do to those who flouted his authority, and when he was sent to arrest a thief, he would arrest some one, no matter who it was, and all rash puppets who objected to the imprisonment of an innocent man would be dragged off to jail too. The most famous Captain of the puppet stage was Rodomont of Sicily, the Saracen, who told how with a flourish of his sword he routed whole armies and how with one terrible glance he destroyed cities. But he was easily unhorsed at his famous bridge by the heroic woman warrior, Bradamant. In Germany this man of arms was called Captain Horribilicribrifax, and if his enemies were not terrified by his oaths and glares they must have trembled at his name.

The puppet Stenterello loved to caricature the fire-eating Captain and the boastful Scaramouch. He swore terrible oaths, "by blood and saw-dust," which is a puppet's blood of course, declaring by "bombs and cannons," that with a single stroke of his sword he had split in twain a horse and rider from head to heels. He imitated their arrogant stride, as much as a man could imitate a stride when he was knock-kneed like Stenterello and his shoes were as much too large

as his. He must have bought the shoes at a second-hand sale, and the rest of his wardrobe too, for none of his garments matched the others. His coat was sky-blue and his waist-coat yellow; his breeches were half black and half apple-green, as if they had been made out of two worn-out pairs, one leg salvaged from each; one of his cotton stockings was red and the other was blue with white stripes.

All this was to show that Stenterello was miserly. His thrift was not surprising, for he was born in Tuscany, where the people are so saving that the almanacs distributed among the citizens of Florence always advise the readers to spend money liberally and not carry the virtue of thrift to the point of a fault. Stenterello took his name from the tightness of his purse-strings and from his half-starved condition. His character showed in his close-set eyes and the three blue lines painted on each side of his tight-lipped mouth, for he never wore a mask. He had one front tooth missing and this was a great help to him in speaking his native dialect, for it is said that the Tuscans pick up all the h's that are dropped in England and mix them with the c's and s's in their language. But perhaps the h's of Tuscany seem more prominent to the Italians than they really are, for no other dialect except the Tuscan has them at all, and Harlequin is Arlechino everywhere else in Italy.

Stenterello was greedy like all the servants in the Italian comedies. In Bologna he was so absent-minded that, when he waited on table, he was always mistaking the guests' heads for their soup plates, and pouring the first course onto their fine wigs. His own wig he was as apt to wear wrong side around as not.



In Venice, too, he was very absent-minded, beginning sentences which he never finished, at least not until the next act, when he would suddenly remember and go on as if nothing had happened in the meantime. Whenever he told a story he constantly interrupted himself and forgot the point.

Stenterello's name on the marionette stage of Milan was Girolamo. He was always getting the best of a clumsy Piedmontese clown. But the Piedmontese had their revenge, for Gianduja, who was the Stenterello of Turin, had as his dupe a rustic caricature of the Lombards in the neighbourhood of Milan.

When Brighella visited Milan, he took the name of Beltrame. In Bologna he grew old and usurped Tabarino's place as the parent of Columbine. There was a trickster in Bologna named Birrichino, who was very like Pulcinella, and was forever picking pockets just to show how accomplished a thief he could be if he were really dishonest. He always returned his booty after he had enjoyed watching the owners bewail their loss, and he was never punished for his theft because he always tripped up the policeman who tried to arrest him.

Every time one of the masked puppets settled in a town, he adopted the dress as well as the name that suited his patrons, and soon he also acquired the customs of the townsmen. So each puppet became a distinct individuality, even if he still had a marked resemblance to the rest of his family, and Harlequin's company grew larger and larger. The nimble little head comedian, dressed in his spotted suit, is still dancing and turning his astonishing



somersaults on the little stage. In the marionette theatres, the agile fellow is dressed in a checkered doublet, but now the squares are only yellow, red and green. He has lost the brown spots that stood for constancy. He still wears his mask and the black chin-piece that he adopted when he shaved his beard, but his mustachios and eyebrows have turned white with age. When Harlequin at last retires from public life, he will still kick and cavort at the pull of a string. Youngsters all over the world love the agile jester, as in the past the Italian children loved him best of all the puppets. It is Harlequin who hangs in the toy-shop windows, though now we call him "Jumping Jack."

## XII

The Play That Lasts a Year

“OF LOVES and LADIES, KNIGHTS and ARMS, I sing,  
Of COURTESIES, and many a DARING FEAT;  
And from those ancient days my story bring,  
When Moors from Afric passed in hostile fleet,  
And ravaged France, with Agramant their king, . . .

“In the same strain of Roland will I tell  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,  
On whom strange madness and rank fury fell,  
A man esteemed so wise in former time; . . .

“Amid the worthiest shalt thou hear,  
Whom I with fitting praise prepare to grace,  
Record the good Rogero, valiant peer,  
Whose worth and warlike feats I shall retrace.”

From Rose's Translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

## The Play That Lasts a Year

THE most heroic puppet that ever strode the boards is Orlando. The marvellous adventures through which this intrepid warrior moves unharmed are only equalled by the exploits of the real knight in the legends. Orlando is the Italian name for Roland, King Charlemagne's Paladin, the glorious hero of *The Song of Roland*. The Italians have turned the first syllable of his name around and given him an O on the end to make him a native of Italy. They have also invented new adventures for him and have provided him with plenty of love-making, as befits a gallant Italian puppet, and Orlando is the chief character of hundreds of puppet plays founded on the legends of Charlemagne's court.

The puppet showmen find the plots for all these plays in the metrical romances of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They have dramatized Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*, the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, and Pulci's *Life and Death of the Giant, Morgante Maggiore*, all filled with romantic and heroic exploits for the gallant puppet, Orlando. There are also adventures for all his friends, the devoted Oliver, the brave Rinaldo, for Rogero, the courteous knight, so noble that even his enemies loved him, for Astolfo, the handsome Englishman, and for those two warlike ladies, Rogero's sister Marphisa, and the gentle Bradamant, who were no less to be admired as fighters than the valiant Paladins.

Any one of these warriors may be the hero of the play or of a series of plays, but Orlando appears in all of them. And he is always the tallest actor on the stage, for he is the noblest puppet of them all.

Orlando's foes are the pagan warriors, the followers of Agramant, the Saracen Emperor of Africa. They were all brave fighters too, but destined to storms of hisses from the devout Italians, with no hope of winning applause except by dying. But every Christian paladin is applauded, no matter how much he robs and murders, except, of course, the traitor, Gan, and the other Manganzese, who win more hisses than even the pagan knights.

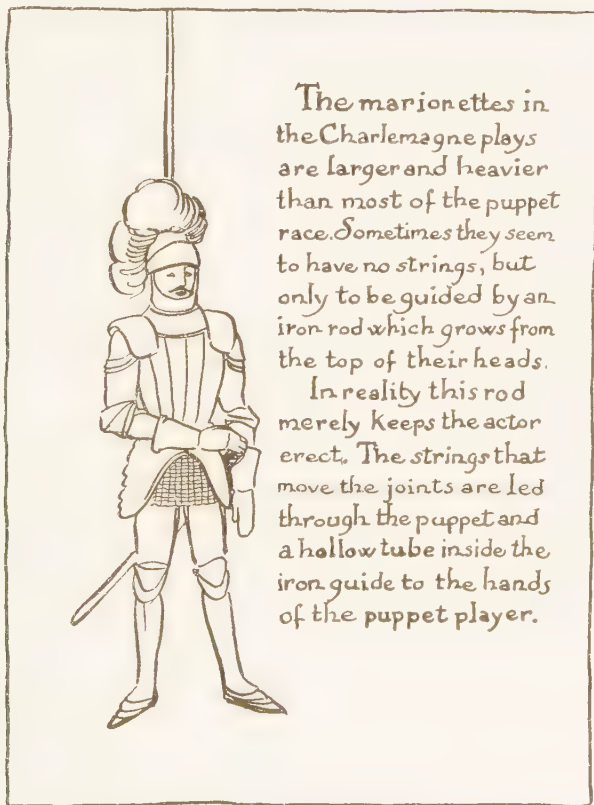
It is not difficult to distinguish between the Christians and Pagans when they are engaged in battle. The noble Christian knights are fair in colour and are dressed in shining armour and elegant velvet and silks and lace, while the hated Paynims have swarthy faces and are shabbily attired and their armour is allowed to become tarnished.

"That is Ganelon," said the small son of an Italian showman in New York, giving the villain his full name, as he explained the play to a visitor. "We never wash his face because he is a bad man."

Gan was dark-visaged, of course. Rogero and his sister Marphisa, being converts to the Christian faith, were fair and very elegantly dressed, but their hair and eyes were dark to show that they fought with the Moors. This colour arrangement made them conspicuous in whatever company they appeared, contrasted with the Moors by their fair faces and with the Paladins by their dark hair.

The marionettes in the Charlemagne plays are larger and

heavier than most of the puppet race. They are about three feet high and many of them weigh, with all their caparison, as much as a hundred pounds. No wonder that when



The marionettes in the Charlemagne plays are larger and heavier than most of the puppet race. Sometimes they seem to have no strings, but only to be guided by an iron rod which grows from the top of their heads.

In reality this rod merely keeps the actor erect. The strings that move the joints are led through the puppet and a hollow tube inside the iron guide to the hands of the puppet player.

a battle is over and the din and dust have subsided and the dead lie in great piles the puppet players are exhausted and the sweat runs from their bodies, though they are stripped to the waist.

Huge and stiff as the actors are, they can pull down their own visors; draw their own swords and wield them vigorously; and shift their shields from side to side. This skill is the result of centuries of practice. Both the actors and their managers have been in the show business for generations. There are as many families of long lineage in the puppet show business as in the circus.

The puppet Orlando has been appearing in Sicily for generations too. The wooden actors have always been popular there and every town has its marionette theatres, open every day in the year, except Good Friday, and always packed to the doors. The boys stop on the street corners to debate the warlike merits of the Paladins. They would cheerfully go without their suppers for a chance to see the fights on the puppet stage.

The Sicilian peasants often have sign artists paint scenes from the Charlemagne legends in bright red and green and canary yellow, on their queer little two-wheeled carts, and they know the stories of the Paladins almost by heart. Yet they have never read the poems, for most of them cannot read. But they have heard the verses recited by the picturesque fellows who still travel about Sicily, like the minstrels of ancient Greece and mediæval Europe. These strolling story tellers mount the tables in the parks, and, flourishing their wooden swords, declaim the old legends in the grandiloquent language of the poets. These wandering bards and the puppet plays provide the literary amusements of Sicily.

The marionette theatres are to be found in the market-place of the poorer quarters, surrounded by stalls full of



bright-coloured fruits and vegetables, where the smell of fish and the cries of the venders are thickest. The puppets' habitation is usually temporary, for their theatre is often a vacant shop, and when the store is rented, the showman must move his company to another empty room. But the entrance is easily recognized by the flaming posters above the doorway, showing deadly combats in crude water colour drawings.

While in Italy, detached episodes from the Roland story are made into plays, in Sicily the whole story of the Paladins is presented night after night. The adventures of a single hero may continue for six months, while the entire cycle of the Charlemagne plays lasts from two to five years. The playbill posted outside the door of the theatre will tell what the play is to be. It may be any one of the battles between the Christians and the pagans or the adventures of the Princess Angelica, whose beauty wrought such havoc among Charlemagne's susceptible warriors, or it may be the story of Astolfo's journey to the moon on his winged steed in search of mad Orlando's wits. We must be prepared for enchantments cast by wizards, magic castles that grow and disappear at the wave of a wand, and brave warriors made powerless by some magician's spell, for in the Italian legends of Orlando there is always a supernatural atmosphere. One minute the stage may be occupied by real flesh and blood puppets, and the next, alive with fairies and goblins. To-day the Paladins may be seen in the tumult of fierce battles and violent tempests, but to-morrow they will be placidly engaged in friendly tourneys and gallantries, or dining, or riding to

hounds, or looking at a gallery of pictures. Perhaps the play will show the siege of Paris, and the storming of the city by the Moors. If so, we will see how St. Michael, then the patron saint of France, descended from heaven and saved the Christian city by sending Discord among the wicked Paynims to stir up old quarrels and weaken their anger against the Christians.

But it seems there are more peaceful events in prospect. The playbill reads:

“To-night will be shown, *The Marriage of the warrior maid BRADAMANT*, sister to Rinaldo, a Paladin of King Charlemagne; *The return of ROGERO* and the heroes, *ORLANDO*, *RINALDO*, and *OLIVIER*, the saviours of France, and the *FESTIVITIES*, *FEASTINGS*, *TOURNEYS*, and *JOUSTS* held in their honour; the great *BATTLE* between the Greeks and the Bulgars before Belgrade; How *ROGERO* was thrown into prison and rescued.

A magnificent *TOURNAMENT* will be shown in which Rogero wins a joust and wins with it the fair Bradamant, yet may not claim her for his bride; Rogero’s wanderings in the wilderness; and how he was *MARRIED* to the gentle Bradamant.”

Rogero, as the Sicilians call Roger, is a more popular hero even than Orlando. According to the poets he was a descendant of the Trojan Hector, through his son Astyanax, who was reputed by some poets to have escaped when the Greeks sacked Troy and to have founded the royal house of Sicily. Rogero was the son of a Christian knight, Rogero of Risa; but he and his sister Marphisa had fallen into the

hands of the Moors and had been reared as pagans. When they learned of their parentage from the enchantress Melissa, the brother and sister embraced the Christian faith. In Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Rogero is called by the name the old poets gave to a noble youth, The Child, and he is the real hero of that poem, which is the basis of most of the Charlemagne puppet plays.

Within the theatre the walls are decorated with gay-coloured paintings like the posters at the door. The cardboard curtain also is adorned with a scene, showing the heroic deeds of the Paladins, and a painted representation of drapery ornamented with yellow tassels and plump cherubs. The room is dark except for the flickering glow of the smoking footlights. The orchestra is a swarthy man with a coloured handkerchief around his neck. He bangs on a piano or an organ and attends to clashing the cymbals and drums during the dancing and fighting. The music is in the most melodramatic style, loudest when the battle and carnage is at its height and soft and slow when love or grief is ascendant on the stage.

In this dark, ill-ventilated room where the hard benches jostle each other so closely that the late comers must climb over them, the Sicilians, quite unmindful of all discomforts, watch the glorious deeds of chivalry acted by nobles and heroes on the stage. The stories that the poets wove into intricate verse to while away the tedium of idle princelings and their courts now are enjoyed by this audience in shirt sleeves, weary from the day's toil, for it is always those whose own lives are dull who seek adventure and romance in their entertainments.

The showman behind the scenes speaks all the parts in the sonorous language of the poet. Sometimes the stories are read from a book, but most Sicilian showmen have given the plays so many times that they are almost as familiar with them as Galileo, who, it is said, knew Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* by heart. While the poem is read the puppets act the story in pantomime, although sometimes they seem to talk, speaking always in the words of the poet, continued from the showman's description. Occasionally the language of the play lapses into the vernacular, when the poet has not provided enough vivid descriptions or fervid speeches for the puppets. But all the crudities in style are unnoticed by the Sicilian audience.

The curtain rises, revealing a lighted space about five feet wide. The stage is set, and one evening's part of a six months' division of the five years' play is about to begin. Soon we shall see in what manner Orlando conducts himself in one of his thousand and five hundred plays.

The scene, according to the programme, is "Charlemagne's court at Paris in France." King Charlemagne himself enters with the lords and ladies of his court. The ladies are attired in bright-coloured dresses and the men wear shining armour with plumed helmets. The ladies glide onto the stage, but the knights walk with an immense stride. The puppets' walk is so amusing that the Sicilian students, when they meet each other on the street, love to imitate it. If a Sicilian marionette should neglect to enter with the customary buoyant step, the audience would protest and he would be obliged to exit and enter again according to tradition.

We recognize King Charlemagne by his clenched fist and his great height; the real Charlemagne is supposed to have been seven feet tall. He wears a gold crown topped by a cross. It is simple and unadorned with jewels, for, according to legend, the great King was economical. As he talks, he rolls his glassy eyes; only the important characters have movable eyes. The other actors make sweeping gestures and strike their chests feelingly as they talk to the King. The puppets have a language of gestures which the audience understands. A hand held to the forehead means that the actor is weeping, that is, if the back of the hand is against the face; if the palm of the hand touches his face, the puppet is thinking. Puppets wriggle their feet to show that they are angry, and when they are tired they lean back.

As soon as the King is seated, with his royal robes wrapped around him, and the ladies and gentlemen of the court arranged about, a messenger appears and in a high boyish voice announces the defeat of the African Emperor and the return of the heroes, Orlando, Olivier, and Rinaldo. The great war with the Pagans is over.

Charlemagne rubs his hands across his face as he weeps for bold Brandimart, whom the returning heroes, on their way home from Africa, had left in a Sicilian grave. The audience is full of sympathy. They know all about Brandimart; it was he who led the attack at Biserta and who leaped alone into the town, when the ladder fell from the wall with his comrades. Only the other night when they saw the play of the last fight on the African shore, where Brandimart and Orlando and the good knight Olivier

fought with three Paynim Kings, they witnessed the death of Brandimart.

The showman reads behind the scenes:

“The streets were spread with gorgeous tapestry,  
And flowers were strewn along the heroes’ path,  
And all the ways were decked with garlands gay  
And green with arching boughs. The city gates  
Were hung with trophies painted bright to show  
Biserta wrapped in smoke and leaping flames  
And other exploits of the Christian knights.”

The trumpets blow, the organ cranks, the cymbals clash, the knights and ladies all cheer as the three heroes enter, marching in time to the music. The audience also greets them with loud applause, the boys hailing their favourites by name. They recognize the Paladins by their crests. They know Rinaldo by the lion on his shield—he is almost as famous as his cousin, Orlando—and Sir Olivier wears a design of the sun and moon and his motto, “Till he comes.” He is Orlando’s friend and therefore worthy of applause. The tallest knight has blazoned on his shield “the burning bolt and lofty Babel’s wreck” that is the crest of Roland. With the heroes comes Astolfo, the handsomest of mankind. The leopards of England are embroidered on his saddle-cloth, for he is the English King’s son. Stalking onto the stage in their bright and shining armour, the heroes kneel before their King. Magnificently he rises and raises them to their feet and welcomes each knight separately, first embracing his nephews, Rinaldo and Orlando. He



asks questions in a deep voice about their adventures, to which the Paladins answer in manly tones.

But one of the knights stands back as if he were not quite sure of his welcome. Now Orlando and Rinaldo take him by the hand and lead him to the King.

“To Charles’s presence they Rogero bring,  
And tell his lineage, he Rogero’s son  
Of Risa; see, he bears upon his shield  
The silver eagle on an azure ground,  
The bird of Ide that bore off Ganymede,  
The prince of Troy, to be Jove’s cupbearer;  
And this Rogero, like his father, famed  
For virtuous deeds and brave. Our troops will bear  
True witness to his valour learned full well  
In many a battle with the courteous knight.”

When Rogero comes forward, his sister, Marphisa, who has just entered with Bradamant, rushes up and throws both arms over his shoulders. But Bradamant stands shyly to one side. For all she was a brave warrior, one whose lance unhorsed all opponents, Bradamant was not a forward maiden. Besides, her betrothal to Rogero has not been announced to any one except to those in the audience, who, coming to the puppet theatre night after night, have witnessed the betrothal of these two lovers.

Both of these ladies wear armour like that of the other knights. It is only by Marphisa’s long black locks and Bradamant’s golden curls and the snow-white mantle over their armour that we can tell them from their brother war-



riors. When Marphisa speaks her voice is shrill and squeaky and Bradamant welcomes her beloved Rogero in a high soprano voice quite different from the deep bass of Rogero's tender answers.

In the next act the scene is not changed, although the decorations have been removed. Rinaldo is telling his father that he has promised the hand of his sister in marriage to Rogero.

“Duke Aymon in great anger answered him  
Who dared to plight his sister's troth without  
Consent from him, and plight it to a man  
Whose nobleness was all the wealth he owned,  
Whose only sceptre was his worth. The Duke  
Spoke readily of rule, for lately he  
Had pledged his daughter's hand to one whose birth  
Was royal, princely Leo, son and heir  
Of Constantine, the Grecian Emperor.”

Rinaldo stands his ground well. He reminds his father of Rogero's nobility, of the great debt they owe him because he rescued Bradamant's twin, Richardetto, from a cruel death by fire and saved her brothers, Malagigi and Viviane, from being sold into slavery by the wicked Manganzese. Orlando and Olivier both agree with Rinaldo and nod their heads at everything he says. The audience is with him too, but all their applause has no effect on the obdurate father.

Now Bradamant's mother takes a hand. She does not intend to have her ambitions for her daughter's marriage

interfered with, and she urges Bradamant herself to rebuke her "insolent" brother.

"Tell him that thou wouldst rather take thy life,  
Than wed a husband without lands or gold!"

After the lady has spoken her mind, they all leave the stage—all but Bradamant. The maiden who was the cause of this family discussion has said not a word, but as soon as she is alone she voices her sentiments freely:

"Ah, Heaven! What could I say! Could I refuse  
Obedience where reverence is due?  
If I obey my conscience, then I must  
Renounce allegiance to my parents' sway.  
Filial love and the great love I bear  
Rogero call me different ways. If I  
Am true to her who gave me life, I must  
Be false to him who only honour knows!  
My father's judgment I have always thought  
Was right, and yet Rinaldo I revere.  
Orlando, too, whom all mankind admires,  
My choice approves. And then my plighted word  
Given to Rogero! Heaven regards us one!"

The showman's voice trembles over these lines, and Bradamant weeps and beats her breast and tears her golden hair.

But as King Charles enters she dries her eyes and, kneeling before him, begs:

“‘O Sire, if e’er my deeds have pleased my King,  
Grant my request. Deny not what I plead!’”

He raises her from the ground.

“‘O valiant maid,’ the Emperor replied,  
‘Thy worth is such I could not well refuse  
To give what thou desirest, were it half  
My kingdom.’

“‘The boon I crave is this,’ the maiden said,  
‘Grant that in marriage I may not be given  
Except to one who shall with me contend  
With sword or lance; do but deny my hand  
To all but him whose worth in battle shown,  
Proclaims his valour equal to my own!’

“‘Then rest assured,’ the Emperor replied,  
‘Thy wish is granted now. A maid as brave  
As thou art shall not wed a meaner knight.’”

Bradamant’s obstinate parents have come in, just in time to hear this promise. Furiously they upbraid their daughter for her unreasonable behaviour and, in spite of Rinaldo’s protests—for that young hero has appeared and demanded to know why his sister is being so ill treated—they drag her off to a castle, where she will be safe from Rogero’s attentions.

No sooner has the Aymon family left than Rogero appears. He is quite as unhappy as Bradamant, but, being a

man and a hero, he shows his grief in a different way. He staggers across the stage and throws his arms about.

“‘Oh, what is this I hear, that Bradamant  
Is soon to wed the son of Constantine!  
And for a crown and empire in the East  
Her father sets at naught her plighted troth!  
And before valour, wisdom, virtue even,  
He puts a sceptre and a Prince’s wish!  
And I, to give this boy of Greece the wife  
He fancies, must yield heart and soul and life!’”

The response of the Sicilian audience to Rogero’s grief is heartfelt. To the ardent Southerners jealousy is a very serious emotion and, in a lover, more a virtue than a fault. Rogero is having a bad attack of it. He cries out against the absent Bradamant:

“‘Mayhap thou dost not grieve, my dearest one,  
To lose Rogero thus, for poor am I  
And Leo is a King, or soon will be,  
Oh, Bradamant, could Cæsar’s empire blind  
Thee to the vows we pledged in Heaven’s sight?’”

Bradamant must have known how he would feel, for she has sent a comforting message to him by her maid, who enters now.

“‘Rogero, only death can end my faith  
To thee, for I am like the steadfast rock;

Though winds and wave beat round, in calm or storm,  
It stands, unchanging through eternity.  
My heart is not a mould of wax that holds  
One image and another light impressed,  
But like an amethyst forever bears  
Cut deep Rogero's face, Rogero's name.  
If Love should try another face to grave  
Upon this stone, the heart would only break.'"

It is a comfort to know that Bradamant is faithful; but although she is Rogero's, yet she is not his. He cannot make up his mind what he had better do about it. But he decides to kill Leo.

He calls for his squire and cautions him, for he fears that if the Greek Prince, Leo, should hear that his rival is pursuing him, he might escape.

"Bring my Frontino hither, and alone,  
My only squire, in secret come with me;  
And whatsoever lands we venture to,  
Remember, never name Rogero's name.'"

The squire brings in the horse, Frontino, always a popular character, and puts him through his paces to the delight of the audience, while Rogero goes to don his disguise.

The animals in all marionette shows are as good actors as the people; but in the Sicilian plays the horses are like old friends. The poets have shown so well how much the knights loved their faithful steeds that they have made every one else love them. The time that the wicked

Rodomont stole Rogero's Frontino from the maid who was returning the horse for Bradamant, the audience was as worried as if one of the people in the story had been captured. They applaud Frontino now, for, with the possible exception of Rinaldo's famous steed, Bayardo, and Orlando's noble Brigliador, he is the most popular horse in Sicily.

When Rogero returns he has put off his usual surcoat and crest, and his shield bears, instead of the Trojan eagle, a white unicorn against a crimson field. He mounts Frontino and waves his sword. Together, amid loud applause from the audience, they dash off to kill Leo and win Bradamant. Rogero's squire follows on a prancing steed, that amuses the audience by imitating a mule and throwing the squire every time he tries to mount. Finally they manage to effect an exit together. When the laughter has died down, and the curtain is drawn, the showman reads, to the accompaniment of retreating hoofs:

"He rode across the Meuse and left the Rhine  
Behind. Through Austria and Hungary  
He passed, the Danube on his left; at last,  
Arriving at the city where the Save  
Meets the dark river, he had reached Belgrade."

"Act II, Scene I," the programme reads, "outside the walls of Belgrade the armies of Greece and Bulgaria are battling for the possession of the city, which the Bulgars took from King Constantine." The noise of the combat can be heard in the distance. A scout scurries across the

stage, evidently bent on a very important errand. Rogero seizes him by the collar and will not let him go until he has recited in breathless tones the latest news from the battle-field. The Bulgarian King has been killed by the Greek Prince Leo, and the hitherto unsubdued Bulgars, seized with panic, are fleeing before the foe. Even now we see the rout of the Bulgarian army flying across the stage before the victorious Greeks.

When he hears Leo's name Rogero decides to throw his lot with that of the enemies of Greece. He waves his sword and calls to the terrified soldiers to stand against the foe.

“‘Is this the way the Bulgars serve their King,  
Deserting him when he is scarcely dead?  
If among all these flying cowards there is  
A man of courage let him follow me!  
Your duty to your King is not fulfilled  
Until his slayer, Leo, has been killed!’”

At this cry the Bulgars rally around their new leader and stand firm against the Greeks. Now follows a terrific renewal of the fight, in which Rogero is everywhere at once.

The battles are always the most successful part of the Sicilian puppet plays. The orchestra is at its best throughout the fight, and the music is very loud. The showman's voice is no longer heard. He has ceased to explain the play or to read the story; he has all he can do to manage the military manœuvres of his actors. Many of the men in



the audience will leave the theatre when the battle is over; they will have seen the part of the play they like best.

In this fierce fight, the erstwhile victorious army of Constantine is completely routed. But one of the Greeks stands his ground after all his followers have fled. He wears a crimson vest embroidered with silk and gold, and Rogero, informing the audience that he thinks that this man in the costly garments must be Prince Leo, drives his lance clear through the embroidered design.

“‘Die, Leo,’ cried Rogero, ‘Bradamant  
Shall never be thy bride, for she is mine!’”

Even as he is dying, the Greek warrior laughs defiantly.

“‘Stranger, boast not too soon o’er Leo’s corpse,  
For Leo lives and will avenge my death,  
Constantine’s nephew am I, not his son!’”

At this Rogero draws his sword and, rushing after the fleeing Greeks, shouts:

“‘How well the coward Leo shuns the fight!  
If only fate would bring him to my sight!’”

The curtain has dropped and risen again. The little stage, which but a short time ago was the scene of such deadly combat, now is empty and dark. The moon rises and grows bright. It is a disk of oiled paper. Finally it

darkens and the sky grows pink. The distant towers of a city show in the light of dawn. Rogero enters with dragging steps, leading his tired horse. He has ridden all night in search of Leo, but the Prince has escaped.

“My poor Frontino, thou art sore in need  
Of rest; yet but for thee I would not leave  
The quest or cease the weary search till Death  
Finds Leo. Go then where refreshment waits  
And sweet repose for tired souls be found.’”

Frontino's head droops with weariness as Rogero walks beside him toward the gates of the city. And what befell him there the showman tells us now.

In the tavern where Rogero lodged there was a Roumanian officer who recognized him at once by the unicorn on his shield, and straightway sent a messenger to the ruler of the city. So, while the hero slept, soldiers came and bound him.

When they heard of the capture, the Emperor Constantine rejoiced, and the Prince Leo rejoiced, too. Now he saw an opportunity of having this brave fighter as one of his own warriors, for Leo was a man of great and noble heart. Instead of hating the enemy who had defeated him, he only admired the Knight of the Unicorn for his courage.

But the Emperor's sister, Theodora, mother of the young warrior whom Rogero mistook for Leo, insisted on revenge for her son's death, and in spite of Prince Leo's pleas the Knight of the Unicorn was condemned to die.

When the curtain rises again the stage is quite dark.

Rogero's voice is heard calling Bradamant's name and bewailing the evil fate that brought him here. Why did he not wait, he asks himself, until Leo came to Charlemagne's court, and kill him there? Now that he is helpless, his rival will live and marry Bradamant. There is no escape from the prison. The walls are steep, the window is barred, there is an armed guard at the door. Rogero's complaint is all in the quaint language of the showman. The poet, for some reason, did not provide verses to express the hero's anguish.

Now a faint light shows near the top of the stage. It gradually grows brighter, as a door slowly opens, and it shines upon the form of Rogero, lying bound in chains on the floor of a dungeon. The light is followed by a hand, and then an arm, and finally the figure of a knight appears in the doorway and descends the staircase to the floor below.

“‘Oh, noble youth,’ so spake the knight, ‘for thee  
I can feel naught but love where hate should rule,  
Thine enemy I should be; Leo is  
My name, the son of Constantine; yet I  
Can nothing be except thy friend, so well  
Thy valour has endeared thee to my heart;  
And for thy safety I have set aside  
My own, and duty to my royal sire.’”

He unbinds Rogero's chains.

“‘Come, thou art free to go where'er thou wilt,  
And where thou goest, friend, I'll follow thee!’”

“‘What thanks I owe to thee,’ Rogero said,  
‘I cannot pay, except by yielding up  
What thou restorest. Henceforth it is thine,  
And thine my sword, my prayers, this life of mine.’”

So they leave the prison together.

While the scenery is being shifted, the showman tells us the story about the journey of the two friends riding side by side toward France. The orchestra plays soft music, and the showman, sometimes in the language of the poet and again in his own picturesque words, relates how the princely Leo told his new friend the story of his suit for the hand of Bradamant, little dreaming in whom he was confiding, for the only thing Rogero withheld from his rescuer was his real name. Leo told of Charles's decree and how the news of it “proclaimed throughout the Christian Emperor's sway” had spread from realm to realm until it reached the court of the Grecian King. Leo confessed that he had no confidence in his own ability to defeat Bradamant in a trial at arms, and begged his friend to enter the lists, in the dress and name of Leo, and contend with the veteran warrior maid, for friendship's sake.

And for friendship's sake, Rogero answered that he stood prepared to show his gratitude and his love in whatsoever way the Prince should wish. But as he realized the sacrifice his friend had unknowingly asked, Rogero felt a pang in his heart like the stroke of death, and after that he grew more and more wretched. By day and night he knew no peace or rest for thinking of Bradamant and he longed for death to come. His first resolve was to let her kill

him in the duel. Death dealt by that loved hand, he thought, would be sweet indeed. And then he remembered his debt to Leo and his love for his friend. If Bradamant should kill him, Prince Leo's cause would be lost, and he resolutely set aside all such thoughts as being disloyal to his friend. For he had promised to fight, not feign, a duel with Bradamant.

When they arrived at Paris, Prince Leo pitched his pavilion outside the city walls and sent an envoy with gifts to acquaint King Charlemagne with the purpose of his visit. And soon an embassy came from that King, who welcomed the royal visitor and announced that the lists would be prepared and that on the next morning Bradamant would meet her suitor on the field of honour. Through all that night Rogero lamented the hours away. It seemed to him as if the dawn would never come, yet never was a morning so dreaded.

The sun rose on Rogero hammering his sword to make it blunt and Bradamant whetting hers to the sharpest edge she could. Rogero, having the choice of weapons, had decided to fight with a sword, but not with Balisarda's magic power on his side. It was another sword whose edge he was crippling, so that it could not injure his beloved antagonist. He planned to fight in full armour so that he would be well disguised, and decided not to ride Frontino, for he knew that the horse would immediately be recognized by Bradamant.

It was no light task to contend in arms with Bradamant, for all she was a lady. She had a long record of victorious fights to her credit, for she was a great overthrower

of infidels. She had hurled the pagan Rodomont off his famous bridge and made him free the prisoners in his tower. Once she unhorsed three Kings from Iceland, and it was she who "made the King of Circassy salute the visage of old Mother Earth." And mightily ashamed that King, Sacripant, had been when he learned that he had been worsted by a girl, for the pagans had not the respect for women as warriors that the Christian Knights showed.

Rogero, however, was a worthy opponent for this valiant lady. He conducted himself in single combat as worthily as he performed in the battle before Belgrade. He had killed the great pagan warrior, Mandricardo, who had foolishly challenged Rogero's right to the arms of Troy. He had delivered seven kings in a fight with their captor, Dudon, and had overthrown not only human warriors but monsters and giants. It bids fair to be a fight worth seeing.

The curtain is drawn, and once more we see the walls of Charlemagne's city. The whole court has come to the joust. King Charlemagne and the Queen sit at the back of the stage under an awning, which represents the royal pavilion, and tell the herald, who is the master of ceremonies, when to begin. The Herald wears a sort of sandwich board hung over his shoulders, which bears an armorial design on it and looks like the back of a playing card. He blows his trumpet loudly and announces the terms of the joust.

At another blast from his trumpet Bradamant appears, riding astride on a gorgeously caparisoned horse, her saddle built high in front and back. She is dressed in full armour, but a long white cloak covers her coat of mail. At her



entrance the audience applauds. She confides to Marphisa that the court does not look as splendid as it seemed to her before. That is because Rogero is not there, replies that



*The Two Adversaries Charge at Each Other.*

hero's loyal sister. When he returns, the gardens will bloom again with flowers.

The herald blows his trumpet again and announces that Leo, son and heir of King Constantine of Greece, will contend with Bradamant for her hand in marriage. So enters



he whom all the spectators on the stage think is that prince and all the audience out in front know is The Child, Rogero. He wears over his armour Leo's royal robes, and, in gold on a field of scarlet, the two-headed eagle of Greece. The applause of the thoroughly impartial audience for Rogero is as enthusiastic as it was for Bradamant, no more, no less.

Now, at the signal, both Bradamant and her opponent advance to the centre of the stage and salute the royal family in the pavilion. Then they withdraw and Bradamant draws down her visor, but Rogero has not uncovered his face, even to greet the King. At the blast of a trumpet, the two adversaries charge at each other. The orchestra sets up a great rattling and banging. The swords clash, and the horses' hoofs clatter. As soon as he can make himself heard above the racket, the showman explains the fight.

Bradamant fights like a fury, and the blows rain like hail on Rogero's side and crest and shield. He feigns and parries and shifts and stands like a wall against her mad assault; he turns aside every thrust of her sword, but he never aims a blow at her. The combatants hack away with their weapons and the sparks fly from the clashing swords as the fight goes on. The more the lady realizes that her cause is hopelessly lost, the more furiously she attacks, hitting out wildly in every direction. The horses rear and prance, and stir up clouds of dust.

After a while Charlemagne declares that the day is done, and the Herald blows his trumpet and announces that the joust is over and the prize is Leo's. Bradamant has lost her fight. King Charles proclaims that the Greek Prince has won his bride.

“‘For surely Heaven itself approves the choice  
Of one who can so well himself defend,  
And yet regard the safety of his fair  
Opponent. ’Tis indeed a well-matched pair.’”

All the court hails the victorious knight. It is for Leo that they cheer, yet really it is Rogero's endurance and courtesy that they are applauding, all unknowingly. There is not a hand-clap from the audience. They all feel too sorry for the hero. Even though he has won the fight, he has, by winning, lost the reward of the battle. Their hearts follow him as, without even raising his helmet, he rushes off the field.

The curtain falls. The showman's voice goes on. He tells how Rogero, “spent and spiritless” and hating himself, saddled his horse and, stopping only to exchange his shield and buckle Balisarda to his side, galloped away without even taking leave of his beloved friend. The whole night long he travelled, wherever Frontino chose to go, not knowing where they rode.

But see, the curtain has risen. In a dim forest the enchantress, Melissa, is weaving her spells. But this is not a cause for alarm, for she presides over Rogero's destiny and has always placed his welfare before all other interests. The audience knows her for a friend. If Fate intends the marriage between Bradamant and Rogero, she will bring it about. In the Charlemagne plays the witches and wizards and even the devils serve either the good or evil powers, and Melissa is a good enchantress. With her magic art, she now commands the presence of the spirits that serve

her, and sends them to gather tidings of Charlemagne's court and of the welfare of her two special charges, Rogero and Bradamant. "And as one went, another came," dropping in through the top of the stage to receive instructions or to bring news. The spirits are jet black from head to foot except for their bright red mouths and staring white eyeballs. Melissa asks the first imp whether he has news of Rogero and he tells her that The Child is wandering in a near-by wood, bewailing his fate; that he plans to turn Frontino loose and is resolved to die by his own hand.

"Go and see that no harm comes to him," commands the sage Melissa, "and bring him here."

The next spirit who enters looks so strangely like the one who just left that one might suspect he is the same puppet, did he not speak in a tiny voice, quite different from his brother's bellow.

"What of the Greek Prince?" Melissa asks, and the imp points to the left and squeaks out that the young prince is "wandering in yonder wood searching for his friend." Melissa commands him:

"Depart, and quickly change thy garb and form,  
And as a gentle maiden with distress  
Writ on her face, return in haste to me.'"

No sooner said than done. The black imp vanishes and where he stood a fair maiden appears, who turns around for Melissa to inspect her disguise. Evidently it is satisfactory, for the enchantress sends her transformed servant on an errand.

“‘Go then, lead Leo to this forest spot,  
By whatsoe’er persuasion best will bring  
So courteous a Prince to follow thee.’”

The devil disappears, and in a moment so does the enchantress.

Now Rogero enters the dim forest with his beloved horse.

“‘Oh, my Frontino, were it mine to give  
Thee what thy worth has won, thou shouldst be placed  
Beside that steed that treads the starry road,  
Thou shouldst outshine Orion and the sparkling  
Pleiades, thou best of faithful friends.’”

He throws the reins over the saddle and unfastens the bit.

“‘Go now, friend, I shall never see thee more,  
Go where thou wilt, and if thou turn’st thy way  
Toward Charlemagne’s court, perchance that beauteous  
maid,  
Who once thy care for me assumed, again  
Will keep thy trappings fine and see that thou  
Art tended when thy loving master’s gone.

“‘This place, where boughs entwine with weaving shade,  
Appears designed for such a doleful deed  
As trusty Balisarda now must do.’”

When Frontino gallops away, Rogero rests under a tree and pillows his head against the white unicorn that adorns

his buckler. Here, wrapped in dark thoughts, he tosses this way and that, and sighs, and bemoans his fate. The birds flying through the forest settle on the branches over his head. One rests upon his shoulder and another alights on his knee. The creatures stirring in the underbrush come quietly and watch the moaning knight, for so courteous and gentle was The Child Rogero that even the beasts of the field were tamed by his presence. But all these things are unnoticed. The youth is blind to everything except his sorrow.

He is intent on killing himself. His only regret is for Bradamant. He prays that when she learns how he has deceived her that her love will turn to hate and heal her grief for him.

Suddenly Melissa's messenger appears at the side of the stage, speaking to some one who is following her.

“ ‘Oh, good sir knight, if, as thy noble mien  
Bespeaks, thy heart is gentle too and great,  
Refuse thou wilt not aid and comfort here  
To this, the bravest knight that ever bore  
A lance in battle, the most courteous youth  
That ever lived; and for that courtesy  
He now draws near the period of his life  
And yields it for a friend.’ ”

Then Leo comes in. He sees Rogero and runs to lift his beloved friend from the ground, and never thinks of the maiden again, which is just as well, for she vanished as soon as her errand was accomplished.

“ ‘Oh, friend,’ the princely Leo cried, ‘what woe  
Besets thy heart to send thee here with such  
A purpose as thy look portends?’ ”

“I cannot tell you, my friend,” is all Rogero can say.  
But Leo will not have it so.

“ ‘Brave comrade, from that moment when thy sword  
Hostile was turned against my native land,  
Thy friend I’ve been, forever true to thee.  
If I were touched by joy or grief, I would  
Not from my comrade dear conceal the thought  
I held within my heart.’ ”

This plea Rogero cannot well refuse. So he tells his friend the tragic truth—that he is Rogero. He tells him how he set out from Charlemagne’s court to aid the Bulgars, with no other purpose except to kill Leo; and how his hate has been so transformed by the Prince’s generosity and nobility that now he would rather die than refuse Bradamant to his beloved friend.

“ ‘Moreover, Leo, Bradamant and I  
Exchanged our nuptial vows; thou canst not wed  
Her lawfully until Rogero’s dead.’ ”

Leo is so surprised at this announcement that he keeps repeating Rogero’s name over and over. But the love the knightly youth gave to Rogero as his enemy could not fail to stand the test of rivalry.

“ ‘Rogero art thou then? How strange the name  
That once I hated should become so well  
Beloved its owner’s joy is more to me  
Than mine. Full well I loved this maid, yet now  
’Tis happiness from Bradamant to part.  
Then take her! Thou already hast her heart!’ ”

“ ‘I cannot, friend,’ Rogero said, ‘from thee  
Already have I taken so much that I,  
However long I lived, could not repay  
The debt. A pauper begging on the road  
Could prouder stand than I; it would indeed  
Bankrupt our love, if I, with all I owe  
My friend, deprived him of his bride as well.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, my Rogero, have I offered thee  
One thing I have not taken first from thee?  
And wilt thou by refusing it imply  
That I less generous and less courteous am  
Than thou hast ever been?’ ”

At this Rogero’s resistance gives way.

“ ‘I yield, I yield to thee, my friend,’ he cries,  
‘Once more thy voice has called me back from death.’ ”

As if he knew he was needed, Frontino appears immediately and the two happy friends set out together for Charlemagne’s palace.

King Charlemagne is holding court. The Paladins are all present. Duke Aymon and his wife, Beatrice, are in



high spirits, and they laugh and chat as they mingle with the knights and ladies who stand on both sides of the King's throne.

At the front of the stage, Marphisa appears, kneeling before King Charles. Bradamant, she declares, is Rogero's promised bride and cannot wed another. Duke Aymon protests angrily, but Rinaldo argues fervently in behalf of his friend, and Orlando too, who is always found on the right side, adds his pleas to Rinaldo's. When King Charles questions Bradamant about her marriage, the lovely warrior only hangs her head, for she cannot deny the truth of Marphisa's statement, and the Emperor decides to reverse his former decision.

At this moment Prince Leo enters, leading by the hand the Knight who wears the double-headed eagle. The King greets his royal guest:

“ ‘Prince Leo, new events are brought to light,  
Which somewhat alter must our late decree.  
For Bradamant has been full long betrothed;  
Rogero has her promise. He who takes  
The maid must first that knight in combat slay.’ ”

Then he exclaims:

“ ‘What do I see! Two Leos are there then?  
Here stands the Prince in royal robes and there  
Another armed as late we saw him fight.  
Has Constantine two sons born at one birth,  
Or does another masquerade with thee?’ ”

Leo explains that not he, but the knight beside him, is the one who contended with Bradamant, and although it was for Leo's sake that his friend undertook the cause, it is to him who won the day, and not to the one who stayed in his tent, that the reward should be given. And now



*In the stiff way that puppets have.*

Leo lifts the helmet from the strange knight's head and before the wondering court he uncovers the face of Rogero.

When Prince Leo's persuasive tongue has recounted Rogero's adventures in Greece and told the story of the sacrifice which that hero recently tried to make for his friend, even the stony heart of Duke Aymon is melted by the perfect unselfishness of these knightly friends. The relenting parent places his daughter's hand in Rogero's and the lovers put their arms over each other's shoulders in the stiff way that puppets have of embracing each other. At this

all the ladies wave their hands and all the Paladins rejoice. Only the traitorous Gan stands apart plotting revenge. He mutters curses, angry no doubt because Bradamant slew his cousin Sir Pinnabel, who certainly deserved his death, for he had tricked Bradamant into falling in a deep cavern.

This happy scene is interrupted by the Herald announcing that an embassy has arrived from Bulgaria. Rogero's squire is with them. He, when his master was taken prisoner in Novgorod, went at once to the Bulgarian leaders and informed them of the danger that threatened the knight. But only when the news came of Rogero's escape from prison and his flight, did the faithful squire consent to tell the Bulgar chiefs their saviour's name. The envoys announce that Rogero's bravery in battle has so endeared him to the Bulgars that they will have no one for their king but him. How the other puppets cheer when the Bulgarian nobles kneel before Rogero and offer him the crown! The hero cannot well refuse such an honour. Yet he declines to leave King Charlemagne's court so soon after his wedding. He promises the Bulgars to be with them in three "short months." But Prince Leo assures him that he can take his time, for, "with Rogero as the Bulgars' King, Constantine and Bulgaria are no longer foes."

"'Nor needst thou hasten thy departure thence,  
From Greece thy realm will never need defence.'"

Now that Rogero is to be a king, the erstwhile haughty Beatrice sidles across the stage and congratulates her new son-in-law quite humbly. This is too much for the decorum

of the audience. Amid their roars of laughter, the curtain drops.

The play has not shown the wedding feast of pickled radishes, stewed mice, and other delicate viands, with which the Italian puppet plays so often end. That treat is reserved for the next night. Before the audience leaves the theatre, the enterprising showman has changed the playbill on the door, and now it reads:

To-morrow Night.—“The MARRIAGE FEAST of BRADAMANT and ROGERO will be shown; and the CHALLENGE of the King of Argier, RODOMONT, The MARS of AFRICA; and the DEATH of that pagan destroyer of cities.”

The Sicilians will all come to see that famous wedding feast, which is to be so rudely interrupted by the hateful Rodomont. Of course Rogero will kill him, but the fight will be well worth seeing. This will be the last play of the *Orlando Furioso*, but the day after to-morrow the puppet showman will put away his Ariosto and take up his copy of Pulci, and the story of Orlando and his friends will continue nightly for several months until it ends in the tragic death of Roland, betrayed by Gan, in the pass at Roncesvalles.

## XIII

The Voyages and Adventures of the Puppets

“Ah, World of ours, are you so gray  
And weary, World, of spinning,  
That you repeat the tales to-day  
You told at the beginning?  
For lo! the same old myths that made  
The early ‘stage successes’  
Still ‘hold the boards’ and still are played  
‘With new effects and dresses.’ ”

From *The Drama of the Doctor's Window*,  
by Austin Dobson.

## The Voyages and Adventures of the Puppets

FROM Italy the puppets travelled all over Europe. Wherever they sojourned they learned the native language and customs to please their audiences. They danced and sang and recited bombastic verse in Italy. In England they burlesqued everything and in Germany their humour was clumsy, while in France they were satirical and witty. In Spain they strutted romantically about, duelling and serenading, and bull-fights were as common in their booths as they were in the Spanish national life.

From the real stage the puppets adopted whatever they found pleasing. So those jolly fun-makers, the jesters and clowns, the descendants of the Vice that played his pranks in the early plays, were all invited into the puppet theatre. In most countries those droll actors were called by the name of the favourite meat dish, perhaps, as Addison suggested, because the people loved them so well they could eat them. In England the jester was called Jack Pudding; in France, Jean Potage; in Italy, Macaroni; in Germany, Jan Posset or Hans Wurst, that is, Jack Sausage; in Holland, Jan Klaassen—which is the same as Hans Wurst; while a clown named Pickleherring pranced from England through Holland and Germany with the strolling players.

Punch observed the ways of these jolly fellows, and finding them good, adopted them and sometimes adopted their names too. In Holland he was called Pickleherring or Jan



Klaassen, and Judy changed her name to Katrijn. In Germany Punch was Pulzinella or Hans Wurst; and he swaggered through Spain under the grandiloquent title of Don Cristoval Punchinella. Don Juan, whose romantic adventures were the subject of some the most popular Spanish plays, was a character inspired by Punch. The German Punch learned some of his pranks from the old Saxon clown, Tyl Owl Glass, and from the German Master Hemmerling, who was a headsman.

Though the idea seems ghastly to us, in the dark days of the Middle Ages a funny executioner was a joke. The people of those times laughed at gruesome plays, like the Prodigal Son, which was presented by the tailor, Reichband. In this play, when the revelling Prodigal attempted to eat fruit, the food changed to a skull; when he tried to drink water, his glass was filled with leaping flames. As he was reeling home from the feast he came upon a corpse hanging from a tree. As soon as he appeared, the dangling remains began to dance, to the tune of rattling bones and the accompaniment of sighs and wails from behind the scenes. The scene was as joyous as the mediæval pictures of the Dance of Death. The ghost threw its head up into the air and caught it on its neck; then its arms removed themselves from the trunk and flew about the stage, while the legs severed themselves from the body and still kept on dancing. Finally the skeleton reassembled itself and tried to embrace the astonished reveller. Though the audience seemed to enjoy the weird sight, the Prodigal Son ran away in terror, with the corpse after him, reaching out its long arms. But the fugitive escaped. He could run very fast

and dodge very quickly, because the Prodigal was no other than Harlequin.

Magical transformations and impossible acrobatics like these were a delight to a mechanically ingenious people and they were not difficult for German puppets to perform, for the clever woodcarvers and toymakers in the South of Germany made skilfully jointed puppets much superior to those of other lands.

Herr Tendler, the puppet showman in *Paul the Puppet-player*, was one of these craftsmen. Theodor Storm's account of Paul's first experience at a puppet show gives a vivid picture of the little plays that the Germans called "Puppenspielen."

From the time when Paul, who was sitting on the front steps, heard the tinkle of a pony's bells and, looking up from his arithmetic lesson, saw the two-wheeled cart bringing the chests full of puppets and their possessions, the boy, who had never seen a puppet play, could hardly wait for the performance to begin. The next afternoon coming home from school, where there had been more puppets than lessons in his head, he met the town crier striking with his clapper on his gong and calling in his "great beer voice," "The Mechanician and Puppet-player, Herr Joseph Tendler, arrived here yesterday from Munich and will this evening give a performance in the Shooting Hall. There will be presented Siegfried, Count Palatine, and the Saintly Geneveva, a puppet play in four acts." After that Paul could think of nothing else.

"At last," he wrote, "I was in the place itself. The great door stood wide open and all sorts of folks strolled in. At

that time people were eager to attend such an amusement, for it was a long journey to Hamburg and only a few had spoiled their pleasure in the little things at home with the entertainments to be seen in the city. When I reached the top of the oak stairway, I found Lise's mother sitting behind the money box at the entrance of the hall. I approached her in a most friendly manner, expecting that she would greet me as an old acquaintance; but she sat there, stiff and silent, and took my ticket, as if I had not the slightest connection with her family. Somewhat abashed, I went into the hall. There, waiting for something to happen, the people in the audience talked to one another in hushed tones, while our town musician and his three assistants tuned their instruments.

"The first thing upon which my eyes fell was a red curtain hanging above the orchestra pit. Painted on the centre of it were two long trumpets crossed over a golden lyre. And what was a novelty to me then, two masks hung on the mouth-pieces of the horns, as if they had been shoved on through the empty eyes. One face was laughing and the other was very sad.

"The first three rows were all filled so I pushed my way into the fourth bench, where I had noticed a school-mate sitting with his parents. Behind us the seats rose at an angle toward the ceiling, so that the last row, what we call the gallery, which was only for standing, was about a man's height above the floor. It seemed to be well filled too, though I couldn't see very clearly, for the few candles which burned in tin holders on the side-walls spread only a weak light and threw great shadows on the heavy beamed

ceiling. My neighbour wanted to tell me some tattle about school. I could not understand how he could be thinking of such an unimportant thing.

"I looked only at the curtain that was so festively lighted by the lamps. Now a ripple spread over its flat surface. The mysterious world behind it began to stir. In a minute, a little bell sounded, the murmuring in the audience was silenced at one stroke, and the curtain flew up.

"One look at the stage carried me a thousand years back. I saw a mediæval castle courtyard, with tower and draw-bridge. Two little people, about an ell in height, stood in the centre and held a lively conversation with each other. The one with the black beard, the silver plumed helmet, and the gold embroidered mantle over his red under-dress was the Count Palatine, Siegfried. He was going to war against the heathenish Moors and ordered his servant Golo, who stood beside him in a blue silver-embroidered jacket, to stay home at the castle with the Countess Genoveva and protect her. The treacherous Golo seemed much distressed at the thought of letting his good master ride alone to the grim wars. During this dialogue the actors wagged their heads back and forth and argued vehemently and jerkily with their arms.

"Then a faint, but long-drawn-out, trumpet blast sounded from beyond the drawbridge and at the same time the beautiful Genoveva entered, dressed in a sky-blue dress with a train. She rushed out from behind the tower and threw both arms over her husband's shoulders. 'Oh, my heart's beloved Siegfried, if only the terrible infidels do not massacre you!' But her prayers were all in vain. The trum-

pet sounded again and the Count strode, stiff and stately, over the drawbridge that led from the castle. Without, we could hear distinctly the armed troops riding forth. The wicked Golo was now master of the castle.

"And now the play went on, as it is told in your reader. I sat bewitched. Those uncanny gestures! Those doll-voices, piping or growling, surely came right out of the actors' mouths. There was such a weird life-likeness about the little figures that I could not keep my eyes off them.

"But in the second act things were better. Among the servants at the castle, there was one in a yellow nankeen suit, who was called Casperl. If this lad was not alive, then nothing had ever been alive!"

Paul seems to have lost interest in the fate of the lovely Genoveva as soon as he saw the antics of the witty Casperl, and his story tells no more about the beautiful countess. But the play went on. The wicked Golo planned to poison his master's mind against the beautiful Genoveva. When Count Siegfried returned from the wars against the Moors, he believed the false servant's stories and drove his wife and little son into the forest. The poor mother lived in a cave, and her child was fed by the milk of a reindeer. But finally Count Siegfried discovered Golo's perfidy and begged his wronged lady to come back and live in the castle with the tower and drawbridge.

The story is evidently a variation of one of the Charlemagne legends. It is like the tale of the Scottish princess Ginevra, who was "done to death by slanderous tongues" like her counterpart, Hero, in *Measure for Measure*. In the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, Rinaldo restored Ginevra

to honour and exposed the wicked Duke of Albany's false accusations of her unfaithfulness. Puppet plays made from fragments of the Roland stories were introduced into almost every part of Europe, for the legends of Charlemagne and the French hero were popular in Spain, Italy, England and Scandinavia, as well as in Germany, where Roland was represented as a very religious man and such a model of civic virtue that his statue stands in the market-place of many German cities.

In Spain the Charlemagne plays were even more elaborate than they were in Sicily. Wooden knights-errant, magicians, Moorish and Christian knights, giants, and enchanted princesses went about in the puppet men's carts, acting in the inns and fairs and town market-places, where their right to appear was always undisputed. It was one of the many plays from the Charlemagne legends, The Deliverance of Melisendra, that Don Quixote saw acted in an inn by the puppet actors of the wandering showman, Peter.

"The show was set out, lighted everywhere with small wax candles, so that it made a gay and brilliant appearance. Master Peter, who was to manage the figures, placed himself behind the show, and in front of the scene stood his boy, whose office it was to relate the story and expound the mystery of the piece; holding a wand in his hand with which to point at the several figures as they entered.

"All the people of the inn being settled, some standing opposite to the show, and Don Quixote, Sancho, the page, and the scholar, seated in the best places, the young interpreter then began his harangue just as the audience had their ears saluted with the sound of drums and trumpets,



and discharges of artillery. These flourishes being over, the boy raised his voice and said, "Gentlemen, we here present you with a true story, which tells you how Don Gayferos delivers his spouse Melisendra, who was imprisoned by the Moors, in the city of Sansuenna, now called Saragossa; and there you may see how Don Gayferos is playing at tables, according to the ballad,

“ “Gayferos now at tables plays,  
Forgetful of his lady dear.”

That personage whom you see with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand is the Emperor Charlemagne, the fair Melisendra's reputed father, who, vexed at the idleness and negligence of his son-in-law, comes forth and chides him. Pray observe, gentlemen, how the Emperor turns his back, and leaves Don Gayferos in a fret.

“ “See him now in a rage, tossing the table-board one way, and the pieces another! Now calling hastily for his armour, and now asking Don Orlando, his cousin, to lend him his sword Durindana, which Don Orlando refuses, though he offers to bear him company in his perilous undertaking; but the furious knight will not accept of his help, saying that he is able alone to deliver his spouse. Hereupon he goes out to arm himself, in order to set forward immediately. Now, gentlemen, turn your eyes towards that tower which appears yonder, which you are to suppose to be one of the Moorish towers of Saragossa, now called the Aljaferia; and that lady in a Moorish habit, who appears in the balcony, is the peerless Melisendra, who from that window has cast many



a wistful look towards the road that leads to France, and soothed her captivity by thinking of the city of Paris and her dear husband. Now behold a strange incident, the like perhaps you never heard of before. Do you not see that Moor stealing along softly! See how, step by step, with his finger on his mouth, he comes behind Melisendra? Hear what a smack he gives on her sweet lips, and see how she spits and wipes her mouth with her white smock-sleeves, and tears her beauteous hair from pure vexation! Observe, also, the grave Moor who stands in that open gallery—he is Marsilius, king of Sansuenna, who, seeing the insolence of the Moor, though he is a kinsman, and a great favourite, orders him to be seized immediately, and two hundred stripes given him, and to be led through the principal streets of the city, with criers before, to proclaim his crime, followed by the public whippers with their rods.

“The figure you see there on horseback, muffled up in a Gascoigne cloak, is Don Gayferos himself, whom his lady (after being revenged on the impertinence of the Moor) sees from the battlements of the tower, and, taking him for a stranger, holds that discourse with him which is recorded in the ballad:

““If towards France your course you bend,  
Let me entreat you, gentle friend,  
Make diligent inquiry there  
For Gayferos, my husband dear.”

“It is sufficient that Don Gayferos makes himself known to her, as you may perceive by the signs of joy she discovers, and especially now that you see how nimbly she lets herself

down from the balcony, to get on horseback behind her loving spouse. But alas, poor lady! the border of her under-petticoat has caught one of the iron rails of the balcony, and there she hangs dangling in the air, without being able to reach the ground. But see how Heaven is merciful, and sends relief in the greatest distress! For now comes Don Gayferos, and, without caring for the richness of her petticoat, see how he lays hold of her, and, tearing her from the hooks, brings her at once to the ground, and then, at a spring, sets her behind him on the crupper, astride like a man, bidding her hold very fast, and clasp her arms about him till they cross and meet over his breast, that she may not fall; because the lady Melisendra was not accustomed to that way of riding. See how they now wheel about, and turning their backs upon the city, scamper away merrily and joyfully to Paris.

“‘Now, sirs,’ continued the boy, ‘quickly as this was done, idle and evil eyes are not wanting to mark the descent and mounting of the fair Melisendra, and to give notice to King Marsilius, who immediately ordered an alarm to be sounded; and now observe the hurry and tumult which follow! See how the whole city shakes with the ringing of bells in the steeples of the mosques—

“‘See, gentlemen, the squadrons of glittering cavalry that now rush out of the city, in pursuit of the two Catholic lovers! How many trumpets sound, how many dulcimers play, and how many drums and kettle-drums rattle! Alack, I fear the fugitives will be overtaken and brought back tied to their own horse’s tail, which would be a lamentable spectacle.’”

But that ignoble return did not take place for at this point the poor mad Don Quixote, fancying the whole play to be real, rushed to the rescue of the fleeing lovers and shouted:

“It shall never be said while I live that I suffered such a wrong to be committed against so famous a knight and so daring a lover as Don Gayferos. Hold, base-born rabble!—follow him not, or expect to feel the fury of my resentment!”

When the rescue was over, there was nothing left of the puppet-show but a heap of broken dolls and torn canvas. So we shall never know how this play ended.

Master Peter was a most undesirable character. He was a liberated galley-slave “who to disguise himself had set up as a showman.” A few such vagabonds as Master Peter were enough to give a bad name to the whole profession and many a worthy showman had to suffer for the crimes of his fellows. Puppet players roving about the Continent had plenty of chance for adventure, and there are stories of besieged generals and imprisoned Princes sending news to their vassal lords by means of jugglers and mountebanks, who delivered, through the mouths of their puppets, the message, which was, of course, meaningless to every one in the audience except the one for whom it was intended. And there are tales of puppets who won wars and changed the fate of nations by carrying warnings and secrets between friendly nobles, safely concealed inside their wooden heads. This was as secure a way as any to send a message in the Middle Ages, for puppet players were very secretive about the mysteries of their craft and the mediæval people were

so superstitious that it is not likely any one would examine into the wizardry of the dolls' interior, even if they had been allowed to do it, and puppet showmen, like the minstrels and jesters, were freely welcomed where other messengers could never gain admittance.

An old Spanish story tells how Maria, the magician's daughter, secretly informed her husband, Prince Fernando, of her presence at his father's court. Her father, the magician, had hoped to keep the Prince in his power, and when Fernando had escaped from the enchanted castle with Maria, the wizard placed a curse on their heads. This spell would make the young man forget his promised bride, if ever an old woman should embrace him. When the Prince reached home, he, like Tartaglia, left his wife to wait outside the city gates, while he went to get the royal coach so that he might carry her into his kingdom in suitable state. But she waited in vain, for when the Prince's mother kissed him, he forgot all about his bride waiting at the gate.

Maria was a resourceful young lady. She had helped the Prince escape from his bondage in the wizard's castle and she was able to rise to the occasion again. She obtained employment in the home of a rich noble and when the Prince came wooing the daughter of the house, the new servant begged permission to arrange a little play for his entertainment. So she made a puppet stage and dressed two dolls to act a play as she pulled the cords that moved the actors. Then she presented the little scene of misunderstanding between the Spanish Punch and his wife. But for once the puppet husband had the worst of the argument.

"Cristobal, can't you remember the time you spent at the castle of the genie?" asked the Spanish Judy.

"No," said Cristobal, and received a severe beating from the lady, who between the blows kept asking questions that would remind the Prince of the bride he had forgotten.

"Cristobal, can't you remember the curse that, if an old woman embraced you, you would forget your bride?" cried the puppet wife, raining blows on her husband's head.

The play was never finished, for this speech awaked the Prince's memory, and he demanded at once to see the manager of the little theatre and immediately recognized her as his bride.

In Spain the devout spectators insisted on their titeres, as they called the puppets, remaining pious, and even the wicked Don Juan must be converted before he died. In the play of the Death of Seneca, when red ribbons streamed from the arm of the hero as he bled to death, the audience was not satisfied to have him die a pagan, and the play was followed by an epilogue in which Seneca became a convert and was carried up to Heaven amid the noise of artillery and rockets and applause from the audience. The Spanish puppet stage is spoken of as a re-table, the word for an altar piece, as often as it is called a castello, the name the Italians gave it. In Portugal the doll actors are still called the Good Brothers, *boni fratres*, in the language of the church, and the Portuguese puppets continue to wear the monkish garb. In the small villages of France the children carry the manger tableaux on their shoulders as they go about the neighbourhood singing carols at Christmas time; and

the puppets still present the scene of the Nativity in the churches of Poland, where puppets are called "lalki," and where every one can pronounce the word "Szopka," the Polish name for the stable in the Christmas tableau.

In Catholic countries the puppets retained the respect of the public as long as they kept their religious connections. But as soon as the puppets ventured outside the church, they adopted worldly manners and morals and the clergy began to think that the wooden actors were too irreverent to appear in the churches. The puppets could not always be depended upon to behave. They mixed too many humorous dialogues, parodies, popular songs and dances with the Bible stories. Although the clergy cast them off, still the puppets were usually free from religious persecution. When the English Puritans waged a bitter war against the degenerate drama of their time, they ignored the offenses of Mr. Punch, and when the German church placed a ban on the stage and all players were classed as vagabonds and law-breakers, the puppets were considered beneath the notice of the religious authorities. So the wooden Thespians seized the playhouses and took the place of the out-cast actors. The living players became puppet showmen and delivered the lines for the doll actors so feelingly and managed their gestures so intelligently that the marionettes captured the hearts of the German people. It was the puppets who carried the flickering torch of the German drama through the dark days of the Thirty Years' War and all the misery that followed. In France and England the little actors never commanded such respect as they received in Germany, where, during the age of Shakespeare and



Molière, there was no real literature but hymns and no drama except that of the marionettes.

Even though they escaped religious persecution, the puppets sometimes got into serious difficulties by meddling in politics. In France, late in the seventeenth century, the attorney general wrote, "To M. de la Reynie, councillor of the king in his council, etc. It is said this morning at the palace, that the marionettes which play at the fair of St. Germain represent the discomfiture of the Huguenots, and as you will probably consider this a very serious matter for marionettes, I have thought it right, sir, to advise you of it, that you may so act as in your prudence shall seem fit." But as the unfortunate Huguenots were not over-popular at the time, the play was allowed to continue.

In 1794 several puppet shows were closed in Berlin "for offences against morality," but it is more likely that the real reason for suppressing the little actors was that the authorities suspected them of spreading the revolutionary ideas then prevailing in France. But in general, officials did not interfere with the business of the popular little players and "Casperl theatres" flourished in every German city. The nobility were fond enough of the doll actors to defend them against the arm of the law, and German nobles had puppet theatres in their homes and their own puppet showmen, as well as their own companies of players, as part of their establishments.

In France the puppets often appeared before royalty. Henry III had been a great patron of marionettes; and the showman called Brioché was summoned to the place of the King Louis XIV to amuse the nine-year-old Dauphin and



his little court at St. Germain. Brioché was well paid for his performances in money and in the influence he gained.

There were two Briochés, Jean and François, father and son. The first Brioché came from Italy and set up his booth in Paris, on the left bank of the Seine at the old "New Bridge." He kept up a lively trade there, managing his little actors and pulling teeth, for Brioché was a dentist as well as a showman. All the mountebanks that came to Paris, beggars, gipsies, comedians, fakirs, charlatans and pickpockets, made the bridge their office. Tabarin attracted a crowd, jesting through his mask to help a quack doctor sell his worthless nostrums. But this was a live Tabarin. The puppet trade on the bridge was monopolized by Punch, under the guardianship of Brioché.

"I am Polichinelle  
Who stand as Sentinel  
Before the gate of Nesle."

Brioché had a famous ape named Fagotin who advertised his master's actors and sometimes acted with them. Fagotin was so clever and so lively, as he pranced about in his jaunty short jacket inviting passers-by to become customers of the puppet booth, that he seemed almost a real person. But one day, so the story goes, Cyrano de Bergerac crossed the New Bridge and Fagotin tried to keep him from passing. In the saucy way to which he had been trained, the chattering little monkey challenged the soldier to a duel, but the impetuous Cyrano, thinking he was being attacked by a real man, killed poor little Fagotin with one thrust of

his sword. Only his name was left and all puppet apes have borne it ever since.

When business was poor on the bridge, Brioché took to the road with his actors. It is said that on one of his tours, he came to a town in Switzerland, Soleure, where marionettes were not known, and the inhabitants thought Brioché a sorcerer and his puppets devils. The showman was accused and brought before a magistrate, and would have been condemned, had not the Captain of a French Swiss Regiment, which was recruiting there, interfered. He saved Brioché's life, but the puppets had been so severely treated by the superstitious townspeople that there was nothing left of them but disjointed wooden bones.

Whenever there was a fair, of course, Brioché took his actors there. At the Fairs of St. Germain and St. Laurent, puppet-shows were patronized by the very best people, and Brioché was always prosperous. Bossuet, the Bishop of Meaux, and tutor to the Dauphin, tried to ruin his business, but the showman kept up his work with great success until he retired in his old age, and his son, who was called Fanchon by his loving patrons, succeeded him. Fanchon had influence at court also and when the Commissary of Police of the quarter of St. Germain forbade his exhibiting in that place, he obtained an order from the King's minister to play wherever he pleased.

There was a great vogue for puppets in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and celebrated writers made plays for the marionettes and famous people were their patrons. Le Sage wrote dramas for puppets. Voltaire invited a troop of them to visit him at Cirey to perform for

his friends. Just before the French Revolution there was a rage among the fashionable for the little toy Harlequins that jump when a string is pulled. Grown people even carried them about in their pockets and brought them out to amuse their friends.

The puppets always reflected the times in which they lived and were frivolous in French royal days and gave military spectacles in war time. They always made fun of the extreme fashions and tastes of the hour and caricatured all the great and important ones. During the dark days of the Revolution, Punch's show was set up not far from the place where the suspected aristocrats were executed and Punch laid his head on the block and was guillotined every day to appease the blood-thirsty spectators.

Punch's French name is Polichinelle and his wife's is Gignone. Ragonde, their ill-used child, was not born until the eighteenth century, although Punch must have been married long before then, for Dame Gignone appeared with Punch, Harlequin and Pantaloon early in their French career.

Polichinelle is so much loved by the French people that they do not like to admit that he is any relation to those Italian jesters. They were encouraged in this belief by a biographer of Polichinelle, Charles Magnin, who reversed the usual practice of writers in relating the adventures of a demi-god. The poet Ariosto recorded the descendants of Rogero down to his royal patrons, the house of Este. But Magnin traced his hero's ancestry back to royalty and claimed that the first Punch was a caricature of the gay king, Henry IV.

"I might even say that Polichinelle allows us to perceive the popular type, I dare not say of Henry IV, but at least of some Gascon officer, imitating his gait in the guardrooms of the castle of St. Germain or the old Louvre. As for the hump, from time immemorial it has been the appendage of the jesters of France. The second hump calls to mind the bright and bulging cuirass of the soldier, and the pigeon breasts imitate the curve of the cuirass which was so much the fashion in that time. Even the hat of Polichinelle (I do not refer to his modern tricorn, but to the felt with turned-up rim which he wore in the seventeenth century) was the headdress of the cavaliers of the time, the hat à la Henry IV."

It is true that Punch's costume is French. In the middle of the seventeenth century at the Italian Comedy in Paris, Pulcinella changed the white baggy clothes he had in Italy for the red, green and gold suit he wears now. His clothing was then quite in the height of the Parisian mode, for Punch, of course, wanted to please the taste of his fashionable patrons.

It was the desire to be in style that ruined the puppets in France. When the French drama became over-spectacular, the puppet showmen tried to equal it with machinery and fireworks. Gorgeous scenic effects usurped the place of plot and action in the miniature plays. Shows like *The Bombardment of Antwerp*, *The Taking of Charleroi*, and *The General Assault of Bergen-op-Zoom* were all the rage, and such crowds went to see automaton, like Vaucauson's Flute-player and the Duck, and Kempel's chess-player, that for a while Punch was left without patronage. But the

showmen became so interested in amazing their audiences that they forgot to amuse them, and soon there were no more audiences.

Of course there were some true friends who never deserted the puppets and here and there the toy actors were still to be found under sympathetic management. George Sand had a theatre at Nohant, her country home. She dressed the puppets for the little stage, and her son Maurice carved the heads, painted the scenery, and wrote the plays for them. The famous mother and son passed many a pleasant day together, planning some new effect for the amusement of their guests. Toward the end of the nineteenth century Henri Signoret revived the marionettes in Paris and presented Abraham, one of the mystery plays of the Saxon nun, Hroswitha. Signoret's marionettes also performed *The Birds* of Aristophanes in miniature, with the same simplicity and sweeping gestures that the Greek masked players used in their vast arena.

But Polichinelle did not succumb to public indifference. He survived the lean years and can be seen even to-day in the gardens of the Tuileries and of the Luxemburg, prancing up and down and calling to the French children and their ribbon-bonneted nursemaids to come and take a seat on one of the benches he has placed for them in a roped enclosure.

Although Punch's house is a portable booth, set up here and there at uncertain times, at the crossroads, and fairs, and the seashore, Polichinelle has a settled place of residence in the parks and his front yard is fenced. When the French mystery players left the churches they took up a

permanent residence immediately, instead of roving, as their English brothers did, with a separate stage to represent each locality. When the puppets followed the living



players out of the churches, they trailed after them wherever they went. So the British puppets wandered about the country and the French marionettes established stationary homes at once.

But even though the English Punch has travelled more,



his French cousin has had many more adventures. The French have employed their mechanical ingenuity in inventing new exploits for him and his fellows. Polichinelle has another name too, Guignol, which he borrowed from a popular puppet of Lyons who came to Paris in the eighteenth century, and who still acts there in partnership with his quondam rival, Polichinelle. These two have appeared together in many plays, in *The Cock*, where Punch has a feathered rôle, in *The Brigands of the Black Forest*, *The Enchanted Village*, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, *The Taking of Peking*, *Mother Michel and her Cat*, and all the favourite French stories. In Guignol's plays, the typical travelling Briton of the melodramas, with plaid clothes, large front teeth and an eye-glass, usually supplies a foil for Guignol's wit.

Once Guignol appeared in an "American" drama. He inherited a fortune by the will of his uncle, but unless he went to "Vancouver, U. S. A.," before a certain time, an American villain named Haricott, would get the entire estate. Haricott tried to prevent the French puppet and his family from reaching their destination. He blew up the steamer on which they travelled and the railroad bridge they were to cross. But the hero escaped every accident and belaboured every one right and left, especially the Policeman. An airship finally carried the triumphant heirs to Vancouver. They sailed over the heads of the spectators, who were entranced, for an airship was a novelty then. The youthful audience jeered at the Yankee villain, who was left on the ground, and cheered when Guignol landed in Vancouver and claimed his inheritance.



When the chief part in a play is taken by the real Guignol, Polichinelle directs the entertainment. If he thinks the boys and girls in the audience do not understand the lines, he explains the play to them, and if they do not find the performance interesting enough, he interrupts the action with his bright remarks. The French children sing this song about him.

“Pop! ‘What was that?’  
‘It is Mr. Punch, my lady.’  
Pop! ‘What is that?’  
‘It was Mr. Punch did that.  
He’s built all wrong  
And fears he may repel you;  
Yet he begs to tell you  
Of something in a song.’

Pop! ‘What was that?’  
‘It is Mr. Punch, my lady.’  
Pop! ‘What is that?’  
‘It was Mr. Punch did that.  
See, he is gay!  
He takes delight in dancing.  
Just see him prancing  
In such a graceful way.’

Pop! ‘What was that?’  
‘It is Mr. Punch, my lady.’  
Pop! ‘What is that?’  
‘It was Mr. Punch did that.  
Just laugh a while  
For him, that’s what he’s pleading;  
And that’s what we’re needing;  
We’re happy when we smile.’”



Pop! What was that? It is Mister Punch, my  
Lady. Pop! What is that? It was  
Mister Punch did that? he's built all  
wrong And fears he may repel you  
Yet begs to tell you of something in a song.

## XIV

Casperl, the Comic Countryman, and the  
Famous Faust Play

## JUST NONSENSE SPOKEN BY CASPERL

"How many, many years, my friends,  
Have I been here appearing  
And seen you laughing at my pranks  
And my good-natured jeering.

For you, friends, I just had to be  
A fool or naught—that's zero—  
And yet 'twas through my jests that I  
Became the children's hero.

I always knew my part by heart  
And spoke it to perfection,  
Unless I chose to change the lines  
And assume the stage direction.

Full many plays, my dear old friend,  
Franz Pocci, wrote in his day,  
And I have chosen one of them  
That is unknown in this day.

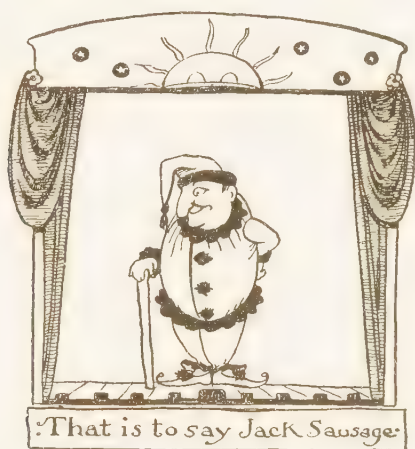
We'll give it for the opening night,  
As soon as I've selected  
Some of my true admirers,  
To help Hans Wurst direct it.

Come then, we must rehearse the play  
Before it's time to show it.  
Now do your part so well that all  
Who see will praise the poet."

Translated from *For The Opening*  
Franz Pocci, the grandson.

## Casperl, the Comic Countryman, and the Famous Faust Play

WHEN Punch arrived in Germany, he was called Hans Wurst, that is to say Jack Sausage. His long nose which was exactly like a sausage may have inspired the name, or his nose may have been given him to match his name. Some-



times when he was talking he would wiggle it up and down to emphasize his remarks, and often before he turned to go, he would point his nose in the direction he planned to take, so that, when finally he left the stage, he literally followed his nose.

When he was ingeniously constructed, Hans Wurst was an agile fellow and his antics were ridiculous. He bustled

about as energetically as his English cousin and, like the other members of the Punch family, he frisked in and out of this play and that, making every one he met feel the cruelty of his jests or the weight of his bludgeon. He had all his old Italian tricks and some new ones that he learned from those ancient German clowns, Hans Pickleherring and Jan Posset. No puppet play was thought complete without his clumsy jokes. In a miracle play, when the angel with the flaming sword banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, this interfering German Punch scolded the guilty pair vigorously and drove them off with his club. It is said that the German version of Hamlet was the only popular play in which Hans Wurst did not appear. He could get into more trouble, and out of more than any one else in the world. Sometimes when he found himself in a difficulty from which there was no possible escape, he would laugh heartily at his enemies, "Ha! ha! Ha! ha! you can try, but you can't hurt me! You see I'm only a puppet made out of wood."

But not all Hans' showmen were witty enough to be really amusing. Those who were not clever, in trying to make Hans Wurst more and more pleasing to his audiences, allowed him to become coarse and the little clown behaved so badly that he was finally banished from the puppet stage, and Harlequin, who had always a more delicate wit than Punch, came to Germany in the guise of Casperl, the joyous Austrian peasant, and took his old companion's place. So Punch disappeared from Germany, and Casperl became the national clown.

Casperl, the comic countryman, had replaced Jack Pud-

ding in the Austrian puppet shows. He was named for one of the three kings in the Christian nativity plays, Casper, or Jasper. Harlequin often took the part of Casper, who in the old mystery play was frequently a clown, and finally he took the name as well. The "l" on the end of Casper's name is a sign of German affection; Casperl means "dear little Casper."

The Germans did not take Casperl completely to their hearts until he had learned some of Hans Wurst's clumsy humour. He could always eat as much "Wurst" as Hans could, for all the Italian masks had a tremendous appetite for sausages. Soon he acquired the German clown's sausage nose, and sometimes he adopted Hans' name as well, and Casperl was known as Würstl, that is little Wurst, or else as Hännschen, little Hans. When he had established his residence and learned the German ways, no one was more beloved than he. "Casperl, the jolly little friend of all the world," Theodor Storm called him. When his dearly loved Casperl was buried, it seemed to him as if all puppet plays were over.

Like many other puppets, Casperl made his first appearance in religious plays. One of them was "The Story of the Lovely Susanna, with music, in four acts," in which the little clown furnished a delightful relief to the sorrows of Susanna. He played pranks on the Elders and threatened the dignity of Daniel. He made fun of every one.

"Nor was he civil  
To Dr. Faustus nor the divil."



The puppet play of Dr. Faustus and the Devil provided Casperl with his most important rôle. The story of Faust is an old German folk tale. This allegory of the man, learned but not wise, who bartered his soul for wealth and power from the Evil One, was first told in legendary ballads. The *Old Folkbook* contains the history of "That Everywhere Infamous Arch-Black-Artist and Conjuror, Dr. Faust's Compact with the Devil, Wonderful Walk and Conversation, and Terrible End." The story appeared in all forms of entertainment, in tragedy, comedy, burlesque, and even in wax-works. But the puppet show was the most famous of them all. It was popular when the poet Goethe was a boy, and was the source of his first inspiration for the dramatic poem of Faust.

When or how Dr. Faust first appeared on the puppet stage of Germany no one knows; but no record of a puppet Dr. Faust or a German Faust play before the eighteenth century has ever been discovered, in spite of the persistent belief in "the old Faust puppet play." Some people even believe that the name Faust was given the Doctor because he was a puppet, animated only by a fist, which the Germans call Faust, and which comes from the same Greek word as pygmy.

The German puppet play is not so much like the story in the ballads or in the old folkbook as it is like the play of Faustus written in the time of Shakespeare by the great English poet, "Kit" Marlowe. Christopher Marlowe's play is the earliest known drama about Faust. Of course the theme was taken from the German legend, which appeared in English stories and ballads.

Marlowe's plays had been copied by the puppet showmen in England, who never failed to help themselves to any play they thought they could use. Perhaps the puppet version of Faust finally found its way to Germany from England, carried by one of those strolling Italian showmen who travelled about Europe with their puppets.

Perhaps it was Marlowe's original play that went to Germany. Early in the fifteenth century, English actors had taken their miracle plays abroad and in Marlowe's lifetime English players were overrunning the Continent, giving dramatic exhibitions in nearly every court in Europe. Marlowe's Faustus and his Jew of Malta were acted by English players in Germany early in the seventeenth century and the play may have lingered there and been taken by the puppet showmen for their tiny actors. German puppet managers had adapted other English plays to the little stage. In the eighteenth century *The Tempest* was presented by the puppets under the title of *The Enchanted Island*.

The German puppet shows seem to have retained the spirit of Marlowe's play better than the English puppet plays. The Viennese showman, Geisselbrecht, was so affected by the Faust play that he gave up his occupation as a showman rather than utter for Faust the blasphemies that the story demanded, although he had marked the parts of the manuscript that offended him most and had avoided reading as much of it as he could. Finally he wrote on the margin of the book, "All that is underscored so moves me that I will never perform Faust again."

Geisselbrecht was the father-in-law of Herr Tendler, who became the father-in-law of Paul, "the Puppet Player."

It was he who made the wonderful puppet Casperl that Paul broke. He constructed that remarkable thumb and devised that marvellous jointed nose.

In the description of the play of *The Beautiful Genoveva*, Theodor Storm has described Casperl as Paul saw him.

"He cracked the most unheard-of jokes so that the whole hall shook with laughter. His nose was as large as a sausage and must have had a joint in it, for when he shook with saucy laughter, he wriggled the tip of it from side to side as if he could not control himself for mirth. At the same time he pulled open his great mouth and cracked his jaw-bone like an old owl. 'Pardauz!' cried he, thinking he was saying *pardieu*; that is the way he always came bounding onto the stage. Then he stood still in whatever posture he landed and spoke at first only with his huge thumb. This he could move back and forth with so much expression that it almost kept time with his 'Here nothing, there nothing, get you nothing, have you nothing.' And then the squint in his eyes; it was so contagious that in a second the whole audience was cross-eyed. I was just in love with the dear fellow!

"At last the play was ended and I sat again in our living room at home and ate in silence the warm supper that my good mother had kept in the oven for me. My father sat in his easy chair and smoked his evening pipe. 'Well, youngster,' cried he, 'were the actors alive?'

"I don't know, father,' said I, as I busied myself in my bowl. I was still very confused in my thoughts.

"He looked at me a while, with his wise smile. Then, 'Listen, Paul,' said he, 'you had better not look too often

into that box of puppets, or the things will be following you to school.'

"My father was not wrong. In the next two days I had such indifferent success with my algebra problems that the mathematics master threatened to take away my place at the head of the class. When I tried to calculate in my head ' $a + b$  equals  $x - c$ ,' then, instead I would hear the delicate bird-like voice of the beautiful Genoveva, 'Oh, my heart's beloved Siegfried, if only the wicked heathen do not massacre you!' Once—but, no one saw it—I even wrote ' $x +$  Genoveva' on the blackboard.

"That night in my bedroom there was a loud cry, 'Pardauz,' and with a bound the beloved Casperl came to me in his nankeen suit and jumped into bed with me. He planted his arms in the pillow on both sides of my head and, grinning down at me and nodding, cried: "Oh, you dear little brother, oh, you thousand times dear little brother.' Thereupon he bumped my nose with his own long red nose, so that it waked me. Then I saw that it was indeed only a dream.

"I locked this all up in my heart, and I scarcely dared open my mouth at home about the puppet comedy. But when on the next Sunday the crier again went through the streets, striking on his gong, and announced loudly: 'This evening at the Archery court, Doctor Faust's Journey to Hell, a Puppet Play in Four Acts,' I could not contain myself any longer. Like the cat with a hot dish, I walked round and round my father, and finally he understood my silent plea. 'Paul,' said he, 'the blood might go from your heart; perhaps it is the best cure to make you perfectly

satisfied.' With that, he reached into his vest pocket and gave me a double-shilling.

"I ran at once out of the house; but not until I was in the street did I realize that there were still eight long hours that had to be lived through, before the play began."

Just what the early Faust puppet plays were like it is difficult to say, for those who can recall them remember only the later productions given when the play was in its decadence. The showmen must have had written copies of their plays, but they were very jealous of their manuscripts and would not permit any one to see them if they could prevent it. They always said that they had no book, that they made up the play as they went along. Herr Schmiegerling, who presented the Faust play in Eastern Germany during the seventies, told that he had learned the lines from hearing his father say them. His father had learned them in the same way from his father-in-law, and he had learned them from the great puppet-player, Dreher, the partner of Schütz. But in spite of all his precautions, an enterprising stenographer took down the play while it was being given. One editor who failed to persuade a showman to lend him the book, had a secretary who was less scrupulous than his employer. He scraped an acquaintance with one of the puppet-player's helpers, and treated him to so much wine and beer that he overcame the assistant's scruples and persuaded him to "borrow" his master's manuscript book. By such underhand means as these the Faust play was preserved so that future generations might have it when the puppet showmen's day was done.

There were as many different versions of the Faust play

as there were puppet showmen, for each director had his own book, or if he copied another's, varied it at will. But in all essentials the performances were the same. To imagine what the play was like in its great days it is necessary to trace many of the features back to their original sources. Some parts of the play, especially the songs and Casperl's lines, were exaggerated, or travestied, and kept up to date, until nearly all trace of their original form was lost.

In some versions of the play, there was a prelude in Hades. Charon, the old white-haired ferry-man of the Stygian river, complained that he did not have enough customers paying passage from Earth to Hades. He threatened to retire from the boat business unless it was made more profitable for him. So Pluto, who appeared in a storm of thunder and lightning, summoned the Furies and the same devils who later appeared to Faust. He sent them all to earth, ordering them to corrupt more souls, and they vanished howling, amid thunder and lightning, while Charon went on his way, rejoicing because his business would soon be better.

Casperl was a truly German addition to the Faust play. In Marlowe's Faust, the clown was Robin, the Ostler. He dipped into his master's conjuring books and "raised the devil" the same way that the German Casperl summoned him. Harlequin played the part of Faust's servant in the imitations of Marlowe's Faustus that were popular in England and Germany. The jester, Pickleherring, who came to Germany with the earliest English plays, sometimes acted as Faust's servant in the German puppet plays. In some Bavarian cities Hans Wurst still plays the clown's part.



Casperl was at first only a minor character in the play of Faust, lighting the tragic gloom of the story with his merry wit and grinning out from its dark shadows like the grotesque gargoyles of the Gothic cathedrals. Naturally the easiest way to make Casperl funny was by imitation, and puppet players who were not very original, found they could



easily win laughs from the audience by letting Casperl repeat in his clumsy fashion everything that Faust did. The play with only a few of Casperl's tricks was a tragedy. When he was as funny as he could be, he made it a comedy. As he grew more popular, Casperl became more and more prominent until his part in the play outshone Doctor Faust's. His caricature of Faust's actions prevented the tragic depth of the story being felt by the audience and in time Casperl ruined the play. Then he left it and sought



new fields for his talents. There were other plays ready for him to intrude upon, and he took service with all sorts of masters—peasants and princes, naturalists, knight-errants, and artists. Of course Casperl caricatured every one of his employers and made his master's business his own, but he was always more of a hindrance than a help. In the nineteenth century he was dispensing pills and performing surgical operations as an assistant to Dr. Sassafras, a caricature of the celebrated Dr. Faust. In the play, *The Sleeping Beauty*, Casperl was in the service of a poet "in search of material." When the hundred years' sleep was almost over, and the poet, now old and white-haired, was waiting for the Princess to be wakened, Casperl was also "waiting," in a tavern, and taking the orders of all the princes who tried unsuccessfully to dispel the enchantment.

As his fame as an actor grew, Casperl assumed more important rôles. And soon he was a well-established star in the marionette theatre. In the play, *Casperl Becomes Rich*, he had a servant of his own, who, when he was told to "leave Herr Casperl's cards at the doors of all the dignitaries in the town," followed the example his master had set, when he played the lackey's rôle, and took a pack of old playing-cards and left them instead.

In *Casperl and The Magic Flute*, the little jester became weary of his life at home and announced his intention of "going out into the wide world to become a hermit." So he set out on his journey and met all the characters in Mozart's opera. Of course he made fun of all of them. Casperl even made fun of himself. He always referred to his exploits as "Casperl's heroic deeds." But his deeds

were too much like Punch's to be heroic, and he usually ran away from danger and played anything but a heroic part.

He was so officious in all the plays that finally he became a sort of master of ceremonies and directed all the German puppet shows. And if he was not officially appointed as director, he would interfere anyway. When the speaker of the prologue announced that the play would be very serious, Casperl would stick his head out from behind the curtains and reassure the audience. "Don't worry," he would say, "I'll see that there are some jokes in it. If we fools didn't make a little fun in this sorry world," he would explain, "people might weep themselves to death."

The puppet theatres became known as the Casperl theatres and in Austria the coin which was the price of admission to a "Kasperle theatre" was commonly called a "Kasperle."

Dr. Faustus disappeared from the puppet stage. He no longer needed its shelter, for he had found a lasting home in Goethe's poem.

XV

The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of  
Dr. John Faust

“Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,  
And burnèd is Apollo’s laurel-bough,  
That sometime grew within this learned man.  
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,  
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,  
Only to wonder at unlawful things,  
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits  
To practise more than heavenly power permits.”

From *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*,  
by Christopher Marlowe.

## The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Dr. John Faust

THE Faust Play was about to begin; the town musician and his assistants were fiddling; the light showed dimly in the little tallow lamps. The curtain went up and up until it disclosed the high-arched Gothic ceiling of Faust's study. Doctor Faust in his long black robe sat before a table, his books and scientific instruments all about him, and complained bitterly that all his learning profited him so little that he hardly had a whole coat to his back and he was so deep in debt he did not know what to do.

"*'Varietas delectat,'*" read the learned man, from the open book before him. "Variety is the spice of life. True, indeed," he soliloquized, "but it is not enough to satisfy. One man likes this, another that; but all of us have in our hearts something that whips us on toward a higher goal. Why should I not be happier than most men? Have I not attained through my own efforts, without wealth or influence, the dignity and title of Doctor? But a spirit such as mine demands more. Oh, if I could only master the study of necromancy; what wonders I could perform! And then my name would live forever."

As if in answer to his words, a voice was heard, calling in a troubled tone, "Faust! Faust! Heed not!" And then a second voice cried out from the other side of the stage, "Faust! Faust! Forsake theology; cling to the study of necromancy and thou shalt be the happiest of men!"

"What was that?" cried Faust. "I am sure I heard two strange voices. Who can have spoken thus? Who art thou, voice on the right?"

And the voice on the right answered, "I am thy good angel, Faust."

"Any one could say that," mused the learned man. "But nothing shall change my purpose, for I am convinced that only through the study of magic can I attain all that I desire. Voice on the left, I'll follow thee!"

"Woe to thy poor soul, Faust; thou art lost!" mourned the good angel. And the voice on the left answered with a fiendish laugh.

There was a loud knock on the door, "Pardon me, Your Magnificence," and Faust's attendant came in, staggering under the weight of a huge red book which, he said, two students had just left for Doctor Faust. It was a book about necromancy that the learned man had long desired to possess.

As soon as the servant was gone, Faust drew a wide circle on the floor with a long measure. "Now," he cried, "I will put the power of this book to the test by summoning spirits to my aid." He read, "*Cito Spiritus qui mihi ministrare!* Spirits of darkness, I conjure you to serve me, by the gates of Hades and by Styx and Acheron. Let the Furies appear before me instantly!"

There was thunder and lightning and five black and red devils flew into the room and rushed screaming about the stage. As each one saluted him mockingly, the Doctor asked him his name and how swift he could be in carrying out orders. The first one, Mexico, answered that he was "as swift as the bullet fired from a musket."

"But that is not speed enough for me," said Faust. "Get thee hence," and Mexico flew out.

Alexo declared he was as swift as the wind and Vitzliputzli that he was "as swift as the ship sailing the sea."

"But the wind does not always blow," said Faust, "and then the ship must lie at anchor." Neither was rapid enough for this ambitious man. Hence with them both.

When Doctor Faust turned to the black imp who wore a red cockscomb on his hood, that Fury only laughed and said he was "as swift as a snail."

"Then you must be the most leaden-footed of all the spirits in Hades," cried Faust angrily. "I have no use at all for you." "Hence!" And the laughing Black Cock flopped slowly off the stage. "Swift indeed!"

The fifth devil had kept in the background, but now he came forward. He was a handsome creature, dressed in a scarlet hunter's suit with a green feather in his hat. What! cried Faust. "A fiend in human form?"

The huntsman explained that he was Mephistophilis, a Prince of Darkness, and he could take any form that he pleased. In answer to Faust's question, Mephistophilis declared that he was "as swift as human thought." This comparison seemed to satisfy the ambitious Doctor and he proposed the dreadful bargain. "Speak, Fury of Hades, will you obey me for a certain time, if at the end of the length of your service I promise to become yours, body and soul?"

"First name what thou wouldst have from me at that price, Faust," the wily Prince of Darkness demurred.

And one by one, Faust named the services he required. "Firstly, you are to bring me wealth, as much as I desire;



secondly, you shall obtain for me power and the respect of all great and noble ones; thirdly, you shall carry me whithersoever I desire to go; fourthly, you shall warn me of every threatening danger; and, fifthly, you shall obey me for four and twenty years."

"Wherefore four and twenty, Faust?" inquired Mephistophilis. "Is not half that time enough?"

"Four and twenty years or none, and every day of every year."

"Very well, then," replied the demon and leered slyly at the audience. "He did not count the nights. I must leave thee now, Faust, while I inform my sovereign, Satan, of thy conditions, and ask him whether or not I may sign the contract with thee."

"But when will you be with me again?" asked the Doctor.

"The moment thou thinkest of me, Faust," the Prince of Darkness promised, and vanished through the high arches of the ceiling.

"How weak I am!" gasped Faust. "It must be the strain put on my soul by calling up the Furies. But soon new strength will come to me, greater strength than I ever had; great enough to accomplish all my plans." He staggered out of the room with his long black robe trailing behind him.

Now a little chap in a bright buff-colored suit leaped onto the stage and jumped about in such a lively fashion that his knapsack bounced up and down on his back. Casperl had arrived. "Pardauz," he cried. "There's travelling for you. I have come at the rate of fourteen miles in thirteen days, a long journey too, all the way from here

hither." He danced about and kicked up his feet as he tossed his knapsack into the air. "If only my father Papa could see me now," he cried. "Then wouldn't he laugh! Always he used to say, 'Casper, make that you bring your fortunes high!' Oh, already have I them high as I can, for my knapsack is house high and in it is all my fortune. Yes, here in my portmanteau I have all my eclimage." Casper loved to use long words and always got them wrong. He unpacked his satchel. "Here's a lining for a new overcoat," he said, bringing out a huge piece of patched cloth, "for which, alas, the material is still in some draper's shop. Then there's a half dozen good stockings, all but the feet; and a whole dozen brand-new shirts, only the best one is without sleeves, and the eleventh is patched with the twelfth. I bought this fine beaver in Lepizig." He took off his shabby old hat. "It cost me, though, twenty-one groats; while my shoes, newly turned inside out after the latest style, and with the heels covered with hob-nails, set me back seventeen groats and six pennies too. Yes, indeed, it costs money to travel; I can see that, for my purse is in the last stages of consumption."

He pranced about the room as he talked, "But, now," he said, stopping still and looking around, "as I am lucky enough to have reached Wittenberg, I will see if I can get a situation, for I am sick of wandering around. But Gad-zooks, what sort of an inn is this, where there is neither host nor waiter to be seen? Here nix, there nix," he exclaimed, looking under all the furniture, as if he expected to find the landlord hiding behind a chair. "Hello," he shouted. "Public-house! Wake up! There's a new cus-

tomer here who will buy a bottle of wine at two groats. Landlord! Where in thunder is he? Aha! I hear some one coming; won't I give him a fine scare though?" And Casperl hid under the table.

It was Wagner who entered, and the little clown jumped out at him, shouting "Boo!"

"Good Heavens," cried Wagner, "what's this! Who are you? How dare you enter this room without permission? How did you get in here?"

"What a droll question!" laughed Casperl. "I came in on my feet. But tell me, is it the fashion in Wittenberg for a customer who wants a bottle of wine to have permission first?"

"My friend, this is not a tavern," Wagner explained, "this is the study of His Magnificence, Doctor Faust."

"Well, well," cried Casperl. "How easily one can make mistakes! I saw so many young men come in here that I thought it must be a tavern."

"Those young men you saw were scholars who attend classes here every day to absorb learning."

"Learning!" Casperl picked up his belongings. "I thought they came to absorb wine." He sighed as he started to leave.

Wagner called him back. "Wait a moment, my friend. By your dress you seem to be a servant. Would you like to enter service?"

Oh, yes, indeed, Casperl wanted to. Did Wagner need a servant?

"If he has a satisfactory testimonial to show."

"Well, I have one," Casperl responded, "here, on my

back, written by my former master, with a good round hand—and a good round stick too—in black and blue letters. Now it's my turn to ask you some questions. Who are you anyway?"

"I am the famulus of Doctor Faust, who is a professor. And if you would have employment here, just say so. You'll have a very good place and good pay too, for my master is generous. I can tell you now what you will have to do." Casperl listened attentively. "The first thing in the morning you must remove the dust from the book-case and books."

"Oh, I can do that," Casperl nodded. "I did it for my former master too." He showed how he blew the dust about.

"And then when His Magnificence, our master, comes in, you must remember to address him as 'Your Excellence' and always say 'Yes, Your Excellence. No, Your Excellence.'"

"Yes, Your Insolence. No, Your Insolence," repeated Casperl. "That I can do also. Listen, Mr. Famulus, isn't eating and drinking part of my duty too? Couldn't you let me have a little something to eat and drink now—say a leg of mutton, or a little bird, and a bottle of wine, for I have travelled a long way and I am so hollow that my body is shrunk together like an empty tobacco pouch."

"Come with me," commanded the benevolent Wagner, "and you shall have all you ask."

"Rejoice, oh, my stomach!" sang Casperl, as he pranced out of the room, "A feast is being prepared for you!"

Casperl never failed to take all the applause for himself and so, if the audience liked the first act, he bounced out onto the stage. "Pardauz," he cried. "The little bird was fusty bacon and the wine was from the pump."

Then if he heard any hand-claps or even chuckles, he would entertain the audience by giving a little imitation of Doctor Faust invoking the Spirits of Darkness. "What a funny house this is," he would say, "with all these rats' tails"—this as he picked up the measure—"and heaps of books as big as my grandmother's baking board. Gadzooks! What's that round circle? It must have been made with this tailor's measure." He stepped into the magic circle on the floor and turned over the leaves of the book on the table. "Gadzooks, once again already! Let's see if I can read what's inside. What's this?" He shook his head vigorously. "C-Cats—D-B-U-B-Poodle, Cats-poodle. E-K-Karek Barek; A-B-E-R-Berlicke." Suddenly three spirits from the lower region appeared. "Berlicke! Berlicke!" Casperl looked around and saw them. "Oh, Lordy," he screamed. "Help! Help! Help us! What do you black villains want? What do you hunks of coal with the red noses want? O Lordy! Lordy! Pardauz!"

"Only come out of the circle and we will tell thee," answered the devils, dancing around the terrified little clown and switching their long tails at him.

"No," answered Casperl. "I won't budge out of there! Gadzooks! A thousand times Gadzooks!"

"Come out and give us thy hand!" The imps clutched

at Casperl with their long claws as they insisted, "Come out!"

"No!" The little serving-man shrieked. "Give you my hand? Never. You would spoil its whiteness, you black imps! I won't come out. I'd like to know who invited you here anyway."

"Thou thyself didst call us with thy 'Berlicke.'"

"Oh, so that's how it's done! Ha! Ha!" chuckled the little clown. "Now watch me, you spirits, and you'll be tormented for once in your lives. Now then, attention!" Casperl shouted. "Berlocke," and the imps vanished. "Berlicke," he screamed, and they reappeared. "Berlocke! Berlicke! Berlocke! Berlicke! Berlocke! Berlicke! Berlocke! Berlicke!" called Casperl faster and faster, spinning around as he called. The poor spirits had to appear and disappear as fast as he shouted the magic words. They twinkled in and out until at last Casperl grew so dizzy that he fell down and the devils vanished through the ceiling, wailing and screaming.

In the second act, Dr. Faust was suffering from remorse. He had had a disturbing dream. "Merciful heaven, what a strange vision troubled my slumbers," he said, as he paced up and down the room. "In my sleep an angel appeared to me and warned me to abandon my plan of making a covenant with the spirits of Hades, lest I should be lost both here and hereafter. But I cannot change my mind. There is no other way to gratify my ambitions at once. Besides, before half the time has passed I shall have gained such power that surely I can escape the clutches of



the Evil One in spite of all his craft and cunning. And when I have gratified all my desires, it will be time enough to annul the bond? Perchance the angel was merely a fantasy of my troubled mind. Yet when Mephistophilis—”

True to his promise, the scarlet hunter returned as soon as Faust thought of him. “Well, Faust, have I not kept my faith?”

“I am amazed!” cried Faust. “Have you permission from your master Pluto to serve me?”

“Yes, Faust, but my master requires thy signature to the pledge that, after the period of time thou shalt fix, thou wilt be his both body and soul.” Mephistophilis gave the contract to the eager Doctor. “What art thou doing, Faust?” asked the spirit.

“Signing my name in black and white.”

“Black and white will not do. Only red is valid in Satan’s realm. It must be signed with thy blood. Give me thy hand; I will obtain the ink for thee.”

“Without pain?” Faust stretched out his arm. “Here, you have my hand.”

“There, Faust, thou hast blood,” and Mephistophilis touched the Doctor’s hand with his wand.

“In truth the blood flows,” Faust said, “yet I cannot feel it at all. But what is this I see? It has formed letters. I see an H and an O, ‘Homo fuga.’ Flee, O man! Ah! Fly from whom?”

“Thou art misconstruing, Faust,” said the Prince of Darkness. “It means fly to, not from, fly to the arms of thy obedient servant, Mephistophilis.”





MEPHISTOPHILIS waved his arms.



"Then," declared Faust, "I will write my name with it. There, *John Faust*. Now you can take the contract to your master, Pluto."

"Nay, Faust! I shall not leave thee henceforth. A messenger shall carry back the deed of thy soul." Mephistophilis waved his arm, "Let the bird come." There was a thunder clap and a flash of lightning; a raven flew in and then out through the roof with the document in its beak.

"Hast thou no commands for me, Faust?" asked the new servant, "so that I may show thee how speedily I can obey?"

"Only get you gone until I summon you."

"Well, my Faust, name but my name," said Mephistophilis withdrawing, "and I will be with thee."

The Doctor wanted to be alone so he could think; anyway he had only to mention his new servant's name and he would appear. But "my Faust!" The red huntsman already regarded Faust as his own!

Dr. Faust could not imagine what had become of his famulus. He hoped nothing had happened to the faithful Wagner. "Ah, here he comes!"

"I have the honour to announce to Your Excellence that I have executed all your commissions," said Wagner, "and I have employed an assistant to help me in the housework so that I may have more time for my studies. He has recently arrived in town and seems to have commendable qualities. I will summon the person into your presence."

"Good, my dear Wagner!" said Dr. Faust. "I am relieved to hear that you have gotten help."

"What a kind master!" said Wagner to himself, as he went to the door and spoke through the wings, "My friend,

pray come hither. His Excellency wishes to speak to you."

"In a minute," Casperl announced from behind the scenes. "I have not yet cleaned my plate."

"His Excellence must not be kept waiting," insisted the decorous Wagner.

"As soon as I have emptied my glass."

"Come hither instantly," shouted Wagner.

"I'm too busy," yelled Casperl.

"Be not so unmannerly, my friend."

"So?" said Casperl, "I am all ready now, already." With that the little clown entered, which means that he leaped onto the stage and wiggled his sausage-like nose and wagged his remarkable thumb. He did not give Wagner a chance to scold him, but launched his own offensive first. "What in the world is the matter?" he asked. "Why do you make such a row that I can't even eat my dinner in peace?"

"His Excellency would speak with you." Wagner was very patient with him.

"Oh! That's different. I will immediately pay him my respects."

Wagner nudged his new assistant. "Don't forget how I said you were to address His Excellence."

"Yes, Your Insolence. No, Your Insolence," said Casperl, bowing very low and bobbing about the stage until he had bumped into all the furniture. "It gives me extraordinary pleasure for Your Insolence to have the honour of making my acquaintance."

While Dr. Faust and Wagner were murmuring about Casperl, the object of their conversation had discovered a seat. "Ah, here's a chair; now I can make myself comfortable.

Gadzooks! What a delightful chair! It must be stuffed with steel springs." He bounced up and down.

"My friend," protested the horrified Wagner. "Pray stand up!" He spoke in a loud stage whisper. "It is not proper for you to be seated in the presence of His Magnificence."

"Oh, I don't mind. I have just come from a long journey, and I need rest."

"But this is the chair which His Excellence occupies!" Wagner was plainly horrified.

"Well, Casper occupies it now! I can't see why Mr. Famulus has anything to say about it." The clown turned to Doctor Faust. "Your Insolence has not said a word; but—"

It was true, His Excellence had not said a word; but he had been thinking—and of Mephistophilis. The chair on which Casperl sat was suddenly enveloped in flames and the little clown hopped about the stage with one foot in his hands. "Oh me, oh my, oh me, oh my! Help! Help!" he cried and ran out of the room with Wagner after him. Doctor Faust was left alone—no, not alone, for beside him stood the hunter in his flame-coloured suit.

Faust wished to go to Parma and with instant obedience his new servant spread his red cloak like a sail, and Faust and Mephistophilis were carried with it out through the roof, to Parma.

Mephistophilis' flight to Parma and back must have been truly as swift as human thought, for when the curtain rose again and Casperl wandered in, singing a song to cheer up the audience after the gruesome scene of Faust's downfall,

he bumped into the red huntsman entering from the opposite side of the stage. "Now who are you, my dear one?" asked the Clown. "And is it the latest style to appear in His Insolence's chamber with your hat on your head?"

"Dost thou not know who I am?" asked Mephistophilis.

"Surely, you are a hunter. Now what use has the master for a huntsman? He is a scholar."

"But he is also a magician. I am high in his favour too," Mephistophilis boasted, "for I catch all the rabbits—and the geese too—with my bare hands."

"Gadzooks! You must be smart. Say, what's your name?"

"Mephistophilis."

"Mr. Stoffelfuss?"

Mephistophilis shouted in anger, "You wretch! Don't murder my name."

"All right, but don't be so easily hurt and don't holler like that. Where is our master gone?"

"To Parma."

"To Parma," Casperl nodded. "Of course Master will take me along!"

No, Mephistophilis said his master had ordered that Casperl was to be left at home. "However," said he, "I will undertake to carry thee to Parma without the master's knowledge."

Casperl wiped his eyes, "Ah, pray do, sweet Stoffelfuss, for I am mighty fond of travelling."

"Very well, I will get thee thine horse at once. But remember, thou must not tell anybody in Parma that thou art Dr. Faust's servant. If thou even namest his name,



then will I break thy neck for thee. Dost thou hear me?" Mephistophilis roared at him.

"Certainly I hear," said Casperl, as Mephistophilis departed. "Whoever doesn't hear him must have cotton in his ears. Well, I must go now and pack up my eclipage. So he will give me something to ride on! If he would only get me a nice little Hungarian pony! I am very fond of riding and—"

Just then a green dragon waddled onto the stage and hit Casperl so hard that the little clown fell over. "Help! Help! Stoffelfuss!" he cried. "Is that the riding horse you promised me? Must I ride to Parma on that sparrow?" The dragon nodded its head. "Then behave yourself. Don't you know that the rider is supposed to hit the horse, not the horse the rider? Well, I may as well get on." When Casperl sat on the dragon's neck, his feet touched the floor. "This beast is well suited to one who is just learning to ride, for if one were to tumble off, he wouldn't fall far." He tramped as if he were walking. "I hope it won't rain for I have no rubbers; I'm afraid this journey will cost me more in shoe-leather than I'll save in car-fare. Now then, Dobbin, giddap!"

The dragon flapped its huge bat-wings and rose into the air, breathing fire as it flew away. "Hey, hey! help! help! Stoffelfuss!" screamed Casperl. "The brute has left the road."

His Highness, the Duke of Parma, was newly married. The wedding festivities were still in progress. At the beginning of the third act, the Duke was walking in the garden



with his bride. "My dearest wife," asked the Duke, "are you pleased with the manner in which my court has entertained you in honour of our nuptial ceremony?"

"Indeed, my lord," answered his spouse, "you have left nothing undone to give me pleasure and our nuptials have been celebrated with the greatest possible magnificence."

"As to that," announced her husband, "you are yet to see greater splendour. A public proclamation has been made at my order, inviting all men of great learning to attend upon us and display their skill in honour of our wedding. But," the Duke's tone was solicitous, "does my court really please you? Do you think you will find me and my subjects a worthy substitute for the loss of your parents and your native land?"

"Oh, my dear lord," protested his bride, "your question puts me to shame. Have I not enough in your love and the devotion of your subjects to make me happy in the thought of spending my life at your side?"

"Ah," said the Duke, "if it lies in my power to make you happy, no sadness shall ever touch your heart."

Just then the Duke saw some one coming up the path. "Some one whom I have not seen before," he said.

The newcomer was Faust. It was evident that Satan had kept the first part of the compact, for the erstwhile shabby Doctor was elegantly dressed. "Your Highness," he said, "I humbly beg you to pardon the liberty I am taking in introducing myself. But as all men of skill and learning are commanded to appear at your princely nuptials, I have hastened to obey Your Highness' order and

therefore humbly beg permission to wait upon you with what skill and science I possess."

"What is your name?"

"John Faust."

"What! Then you are the famous Doctor Faust, whom all men admire? It is true that you can summon winter or summer, as real as Nature herself can create them? Welcome to my court! I have waited long to meet you personally."

Faust bowed. "Your Highness humbles me with kindness, which as yet I have done nothing to deserve. I will fulfil all Your Highness' commands, anywhere and at any time."

The Duke of Parma nodded. "I will accept your offer with pleasure. But to-day you are my guest. Follow me so that I may present you to my wife as the most celebrated of conjurers."

Faust bowed low when the Duke introduced him to his bride and she prettily added her praises of this now famous man to those of her husband.

"Would Your Highness perhaps like to see some proof of my skill now?" asked Faust.

"Indeed," said the Duke, "if it is not too much trouble for you. There are many things I long to behold, which cannot now be seen. Can you produce them?"

"Whatever Your Highness wishes." Faust bowed low.

"If I wish to see men renowned but now long dead, can you cause them to appear?"

"Only name the men you wish to see," answered the learned Doctor.

"I would like to see the huge giant Goliath and the boy David."

"Your Highness' wish shall be satisfied at once. Mephistophilis, do you hear? Let the boy David and the Giant Goliath appear."

There was a faint sound of music and a curtain at the back of the stage rose, showing David with his sling, challenging the Giant Goliath. The Duke watched the scene so intently that he did not notice the red hunter standing behind Faust. As soon as Faust waved his hand the vision disappeared; the music stopped and Mephistophilis vanished. The Duke asked to have Samson and Delilah appear and then Judith returning from the camp of the Philistines, bearing the head of Holofernes, and then Lucretia of Rome with the dagger at her heart. Doctor Faust showed the power for which he had bartered his soul as the apparitions appeared and disappeared at the wave of his hand.

"In truth," the Duke declared, "you have exceeded my expectations in the appearance of these characters. I thank you for the pleasure you have given me, sir. Be my close companion and, as long as you will, remain at the court of Parma. Follow me."

"I obey Your Highness in all things," said Faust, and thus exchanging compliments, the Duke, with his bride and his famous guest, left the garden. Faust had won the respect of all great and noble ones, according to the compact.

No sooner had the Doctor and his hosts departed than Casperl tumbled in as if he had fallen from the sky. "I

am as amazed as you are by this sudden appearance," Casperl told the audience. "Ah, who is this I see?"

The Duke of Parma returned. He was surprised to see Casperl. "Where did you come from?" asked the Duke. "And who are you?"

"Him, ham, hum!" answered Casperl, making deaf and dumb signs.

"He seems to be dumb," the Duke mused, "unless he is deceiving me. My friend, you shall have twenty ducats if you will tell me your name, and twenty strokes of the birch if you do not."

"No! No! Don't!" shouted Casperl.

"What!" said the Duke. "You can speak? Then you are not dumb!"

"No," answered Casperl. "That's where the trick comes in."

"What is your name?" insisted the Duke.

"Ah," sighed Casperl, "that's just the thing I must not tell."

"Then," declared the Duke, "you must be guilty of some wicked crime if you dare not tell your name."

"Gadzooks!" exclaimed Casperl. "You surely don't think I have stolen anything, I hope. Good heavens, Casper may go anywhere and no one would accuse Casper of that."

"So?" said the Duke of Parma, "Casper is your name then?"

"Who told you that my name is Casper?"

"Why, you yourself told me."

"Oh," said Casperl, kicking himself, "you damned chatterbox!"

"From your dress I judge you to be a serving-man," the Duke said. "What is your master's name?"

"No, no, no, no! That I dare not tell!" Casperl shook his head. "But," he laughed, "I can show you. Now watch me," and Casperl held out his arm. "What is that?"

"That is an arm."

"Yes, but what is at the end of it?"

"A hand," answered the Duke. "Ah, I see," as Casperl clenched his fingers. "A fist, and in your language, fist is Faust."

"Correct!" answered Casperl. "But now, remember, I never said a word."

The Duke was surprised. "So you are in the service of the famous Doctor Faust." Casperl nodded. "Then have you not learned some of his skill from him?"

"Me learn from him!" screamed the servant. "My master learned everything from me!"

"From you?" exclaimed the Duke.

"Of course! I have taught Doctor Faust all he knows. Have you never heard of my skill?" Casperl was surprised. "Why, Fame has trumpeted it to the four quarters of the globe."

"Very likely," remarked the Duke, "but I have not yet heard of it. I should like to see some of your accomplishments for myself."

"Ah, you want me to do a few feats? Well, I will begin right away." To himself Casperl muttered, "See now, Casper, if you would ever learn something, you might now

earn something. Well," Casperl thought hard and scratched his head. "Would you like to see a great wave come rolling up and swallow both of us?"

His Highness thought he would not care to see that.

"Too bad!" said Casperl. "That's a very imposing feat. Well, perhaps you would rather see a huge rock drop from the clouds and drive us both into the earth ten fathoms deep. That is a most effective feat."

"No," answered the Duke, "I don't want to see that either. It would be as dangerous as the first miracle you suggested. Something wonderful but pleasant is what I'd like to see."

"Oh! Something wonderful but pleasant," mused Casperl. "Perhaps you would like to see Egyptian darkness wrapped in cotton batting. That is quite a fine feat, but it takes four weeks to pack it into the box."

"Pray stop talking such utter nonsense!" The Duke was disgusted.

"Utter nonsense! Can you do it?" asked Casperl. "Don't call it utter nonsense if you can't do it yourself."

"Pray do not be offended so quickly, my man, but show me some other proof of your skill."

"Very well. Then would you like to see a Gadzooksical?"

Anything that Casperl wanted to do would satisfy His Highness.

"But what am I to get if I make a Gadzooksical?" asked Casperl.

"I have already offered you twenty ducats, and you shall have them," promised the Duke.



Casperl wanted the money in advance. "Mind you," he explained, "when I make a Gadzooksical, I usually always sometimes remain from three to four months up in the air, and it would be handy if I had the money with me so that I might put up at an inn now and then."

His Highness was not moved at all by this reason. "You shall receive your ducats, only first give me evidence of your power," urged the Duke.

Casperl promised. "Immediately, directly, and at once! Stand to one side once a little; I am now about to make my invocation." He turned round and round on one leg and waved his arms about. "Now," he said, stopping suddenly, "what would you really like to see, sir?"

"Oh, a rabbit, or anything." The Duke shrugged his shoulders in disgust.

If Casperl had been a real magician, he could easily have produced any number of rabbits from his hat; but he wasn't, so he said, "Make it yourself then, for I can't," and ran away.

"Stop, you rogue!" shouted the Duke. "Call out the guard!" A fat, fierce looking Captain of the Guard made his appearance. "And have him arrested, Captain!" The Captain of the Guard ran ponderously after the fleeing rogue.

The Duke laughed heartily as he left the stage. "I don't think I'll have him punished very severely for his impudence. To be sure, he made sport of me; but really he is droll and amusing."

A moment later Mephistophilis came in, dragging Casperl by the nape of his neck. "In with thee, rascal," he



cried. "Why hast thou betrayed our master's name to the Duke?"

"Oh me, oh my!" screamed Casperl. "Pray let go of me, Stoffelfuss! Beautiful Mr. Stoffelfuss, do let go! I never said a word to him. I merely showed him my hand and he guessed at once who our master is and what his name is. Sweet Stoffelfuss! Only let me off this time, and stop breaking my neck, and I will never do it again as long as I live." Casperl pleaded very hard.

"This once, then." The red hunter gave him another shake. "But as punishment thou shalt be left here at Parma. Thy master has discharged thee from his service, so now find thy way home as best thou canst." Mephistophilis disappeared, leaving Casperl heartbroken.

"Stoffelfuss! Hey, Stoffelfuss! Beautiful, dear Stoffelfuss!" he cried. "By my soul, he is gone and left me high and dry. Oh, poor Casperl! Whatever will become of you now, with no work, and no master? And the Duke is going to send around four men with big sticks to pay me for my conjuring. Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo!" cried Casperl. "Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo!"

This was Casperl's great act, and so if there was applause, the curtain would open showing the same tragedy on which it had closed, Casperl weeping into his bandanna handkerchief, with huge sobs. Then Black Cock would sail in through the air. He was the clown of the Devils, and was as ready to make fun of Mephistophilis as Casperl was to caricature his master, Faust, or any one else, for that matter.

"Casperl!" said Black Cock in a loud whisper.

"What was that?" asked Casperl, trembling violently. "I thought I heard some one call me."

"Casperl, why art thou so sad?"

"Have I not reason to be sad? My master has kicked me out of his employ, and here I am a stranger in a strange land where I know nobody and nobody knows me."

"Truly thou art in a bad way then," was Black Cock's comforting reply, "for there are robbers all around here and they would just as soon take a man's life for a couple of half-pence."

"For a couple of half-pence!" Casperl sobbed. "And I have exactly three pence left, so then they would take my life three times. Alas! Alas! my poor Casper. It's all over with you now. Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo!"

"Listen, Casperl! I am really sorry for thee! And if thou wilt deed thy soul to me, so that I may carry it away in twelve years' time, I will take thee to Wittenberg."

"First tell me your name," demanded Casperl.

"Black Cock."

"Black Cock? Well, my dear Cacklecock, I hereby deed you my soul to carry off at the end of twelve years, if you will take me at once to Wittenberg."

"Yes, we shall be in Wittenberg in a moment," promised Black Cock, "just take hold of me."

"All right, I'm holding you!" Casperl grabbed the spirit's cloak, but jumped back quickly and blew on his fingers. "Thunder! I've burned myself. Cool off just a little, won't you?"

"Very well," said the spirit, "take hold of me again." Casperl tied his coat to Black Cock's mantle, and the imp flew

out of the stage with Casperl dangling from the end of his cloak.

When the curtain rose for the last act it showed the same room as in the first, with the same table and chair, and finally the same high-arched ceiling. Faust had returned to his home in Wittenberg. When he came in, he walked about, looking at his books and instruments of learning. "Hail to thee, my home, once the dwelling of happiness! Again I return. Though I am miserable and embittered, welcome me once more!" He paced the floor. "Oh, why did I sell my soul's welfare for so weary and unprofitable a life? In my heart the wound is still open whence gushed the blood with which I made fast the covenant of Hades. True! I should be brave and laugh at Pluto; for four and twenty years he must serve me before I need become his slave; and scarcely half the time is gone. But how weary I am." Faust sat down and folded his arms on the table in front of him. "I am so tired I believe I could go to sleep at once! Ah, sleep, which since that compact has completely deserted me. Blessed sleep, which for so long now I have known only as a name." And, resting his head on his folded arms, he slept.

While Faust slumbered, the faithful servant, Wagner, entered. Softly he wrapped a cloak about the sleeping Doctor and gently moved his chair so that he would rest more comfortably. As Wagner stood looking sadly at his beloved master, a voice was heard outside the stage: "Faust, Faust, wake! Wake from thy sleep of sin and death! The joys thy covenant with Hell can bring thee are but fleeting. Yet to possess them, thou hast doomed thy soul

to eternal destruction. Oh, wilt thou sell thyself so cheaply to a spirit of Hell?" It was the voice of the good angel. "This is the crisis of thy life. If thou wouldst keep thy soul alive, to-day only mayest thou escape from thy bond. Oh, Faust! Listen to the pleas of thy guardian angel. Let me again hover round thee and protect thee as of yore."

"What was that?" cried Faust, suddenly awakening. "Again I heard the voice that warned me once before to shun the compact with Satan. He is right. I will tread again the path of virtue, and seek once more to grow worthy of Heaven's grace. Mephistophilis!" he called.

"What dost thou demand, Faust?" The flame-coloured hunter was with him almost before he had spoken.

"Tell me, what would you do to win salvation, if you might?"

The spirit trembled with anger. "I am not bound to answer questions."

"What's that! You know that our compact binds you to obey all my commands!" Faust was angry too. Mephistophilis bowed.

"Then listen, and despair. To win eternal joy, I would climb a ladder all the way to Heaven, even though every rung were a sharp sword. But thou, although thou art a man, hast lightly rejected thy salvation for the mere passing pleasures of this world."

"Ah! Boast not too soon! I am not yet in thy grasp," cried Faust. "Go now! Leave me forever!"

When he was alone, Faust cried out, "How have I fallen, wretch that I am! Yet is there still time to win salvation if I follow the counsel of my guardian angel and relieve

my heart with a prayer to God." He knelt and prayed, "Oh, All Merciful! Look down from Thy throne on me, a sinner. Hear my cry and forgive my transgressions; accept me again in Thy favour; and guide me in Thy ways!"

But while he was praying, Mephistophilis appeared and with him was the beautiful Helen of Troy. "Faust! Faust! Cease thy prayers," he whispered.

"Get you hence, Spirit of Hell!" cried Faust.

But Mephistophilis answered, "Look behind thee, Faust! She shall be thine! Only do not pray."

Faust turned and looked at Helen. This was "the face that launched a thousand ships, and burned the topless towers of Ilium." What wonder that he cried out, "Ah, what an entrancing sight salutes my eyes! Is this real? Are these eyes mine that drink in this vision? Now springs anew the life within my heart. Why should I seek another heaven, when earth offers me such exquisite beauty!"

Mephistophilis smiled. "See, Faust, I have brought fair Helen of Troy back to life for thee. Follow her; she is thine!" And as Helen left the stage, Faust followed her with arms outspread. "Fairest of women, I follow you with rapture," he cried.

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!" laughed the red hunter. "Now he is ours!"

Then Faust rushed wildly into the room. "Oh, vanity of vanities, oh, false, cursed phantom! When I sought to press the radiant creature to my heart, lo, she vanished, and in her stead I embraced a fiend of Hell! Oh, Faust! What have you done? You have called down the wrath of

Heaven and let Satan blind your eyes again." He saw Mephistophilis laughing. "You cursed spirit! Never will I look on you again!"

But Mephistophilis only laughed. "Rave away, Faust. Thou canst not hurt me! I am bound to warn thee that our contract will soon expire, and then thou art mine beyond all chance of further escape."

"The contract expire!" cried Faust. "I yours? Why, only half the four and twenty years for which I promised you my soul are gone."

"Nay, Faust. There thou errest. But add the nights to the days, and thou wilt see that our contract will soon be at an end."

"Oh, you false, lying spirit!" Faust understood now. "Then you have deceived me!"

"Yes, thy blood is mine; we will come soon and bear thee in triumph to our ruler, Satan." And, laughing, Mephistophilis left his former master.

Outside in the street the watchman cried the hour.

"Hear ye, neighbours all, while I tell,  
Nine o'clock is sounding the bell,  
Take care of fire and of the light,  
So naught can harm your house to-night.  
Nine o'clock! All's well!"

Faust listened. "Oh! So in a few short hours my career will be finished." He knelt down and tried to pray. "Rise, my prayers, just once more to the All Pitying God!" But terror overcame him. "Behold the sky is red as blood



—ah, I see the fiery gates of hell! Oh, grant—no—there must I go—Ave Mar—marred is the music of the celestial choir. Oh, fiend! How you twist my words, until even my prayers turn to curses! No, no, I cannot pray any more. In vain I cry for help. The fountain of mercy is sealed, and though tears of angels fall, yet never can it flow again. For me there is no more hope of mercy.”

From outside Mephistophilis spoke, “Fauste, Fauste, prepara te.”

“Faust, Faust, prepare thyself! And must I prepare so early for my last hour on earth?” cried the wretched man. “Even now I feel the chains of Satan tighten around my heart and the Furies are lying in wait for their prey. Even now I feel the torture of the eternal fire.”

“Hear ye, neighbours all,” sang the watchman outside, “while I tell,

Ten o’clock is sounding the bell,  
The time for sleep will come anon  
And peace to him whose work is done.  
Ten o’clock! All’s well!”

The door opened. “How dare you enter my room, when I have forbidden you ever to come here again,” cried Faust.

It was Casperl, the discharged servant, who entered. “You must excuse me, Your Insolence,” he said. “I wanted to speak to Your Insolence about the wages you still owe me.”

“Go to my famulus. He will pay thee! And now be off!”



The intruder disappeared, but in a moment, the door opened again ever so little, and Casperl's funny sausage-like nose was thrust through the opening. "Excuse me, Your Insolence," came from beneath the nose.

"Out with you!" cried Faust.

"I merely wanted to ask a favour of Your Insolence." Casperl put his whole head through the door. "I hear that Your Insolence is planning to take a trip to Pluto's abode, and I would like to ask you to give my regards to—"

"Begone this instant or I will rid myself of you by force."

At this threat both head and nose vanished; and Faust sat down again. "Perhaps at this very moment I am being tried by the Almighty Judge, and doomed. Oh, awful thought!"

In the wings, Mephistophilis called, "Fauste, Fauste, judicatus es!"

Faust sprang up. "Faust, Faust, you are judged. Ah, it is done! My sentence is pronounced. The Almighty has broken his staff over me and I am Satan's now. Cursed be the day that ever I was born!"

The watchman was calling again,

"Hear ye, neighbours all, while I tell,  
Eleven o'clock is sounding the bell,  
In town and village, they sleep best  
Whose easy conscience gives them rest.  
Eleven o'clock. All's well!"

Faust groaned, and sat quite still, with his head on his arms.



And presently the whole of Casperl appeared:



Outside sounded the voice of Mephistophilis, "Fauste, Fauste, in æternum damnatus es!"

Faust sprang up in terror. The thunder rolled, and lightning flashed. The room was filled with green light, which turned yellow, then red. And, amid the flame and fire, the screaming Furies rushed in and bore Doctor Faust away through the air.

Finally the terrible noises died away and the stage was quiet. Out in the street, the watchman cried the hour.

"Hear ye, neighbours all, while I tell,  
Twelve o'clock is sounding the bell.  
Sleep while His watch Our Lord doth keep;  
All they who trust Him safely sleep.  
Twelve o'clock! All's well."

The curtain fell on the empty room, but the audience made no move to go. They stayed, perhaps in hopes that the funny little sausage nose would peek through the curtains again. And usually it did and was followed by a funny little head in a three-cornered hat, and presently the whole of Casperl appeared. He had changed his clothes and he carried the tall axe and lantern of the night watchman. "Gretel," he called through the curtains, "fetch me a can of coffee, and don't you put any grounds in it. I must begin my duties as night watchman to-day already." Gretel was Casperl's wife. He was always calling to her or telling how she henpecked him. She seldom appeared in public, but stayed at home like a good German house-wife. "And pour a little oil in the wick, Gretel," ordered Casperl,

"for I'm on trial to-day for the first time already as night-watchman of Wittenberg, and I must show them all how good I can do. Hark, the clock is striking again. It can't be quite right in its head. There, I must cry the hour again already yet." He marched up and down the stage, thumping his staff and swinging his lantern, and singing,

"Listen, neighbours all, let me tell,  
Thirteen o'clock is sounding the bell.  
It is the hour that spirits walk—  
But who believes in all that talk?  
Twenty o'clock! All's well."

Then he danced a little jig and, if the audience liked his song, he would sing another parody of the old night-watchman's call, then another, and still another, each one sillier than the last.

Presently Casperl grew tired and sat down to rest. Soon he was nodding; first he dropped his lantern, then his staff, and finally he fell sound asleep and snored vigorously, while his head drooped so low that his big nose almost touched the floor. Then in came Black Cock, the clown of the Devils, and stumbled over the sleeping watchman.

Casperl shrieked, "Kiyi! Who's there?"

"I'm Black Cock, you remember."

"So? Let's have a little light on your face." Casperl held his lantern high. "Yes, quite right. It is Cacklecock. Well, what do you want?"

"Casper, thy time has arrived! Thou must come with me to the depths of Hell." Black Cock spoke in a melo-

dramatic tone that was just enough like Mephistophilis' voice to be highly amusing.

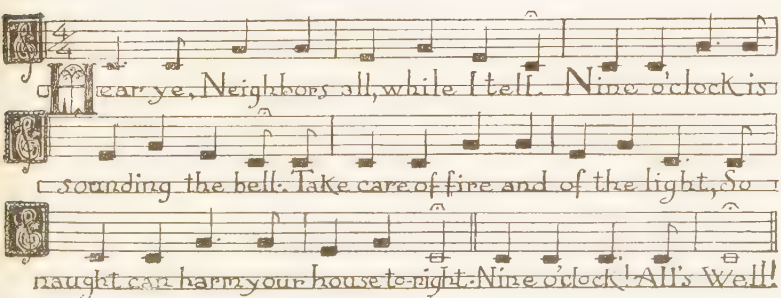
"Are the twelve years gone already yet?" Casperl was imitating the anguished tones of Faust.

"Yes. The twelve years are past and thou art mine." Black Cock spoke in a hoarse whisper.

"You don't say! So? It strikes me that you have taken me in! Well, you are taken in yourself. Nothing can come of the bargain, for I have no soul. Ha, ha! Ha, ha!" roared Casperl.

"Well," said Black Cock, "even if thou hadst one, I could not take thee. Since thou art now night-watchman, I may not have thee at all." He flew off the stage.

"How delightful," laughed Casperl. "Even the Devil will have nothing to do with the night-watchman! Well, I'll be off at once to my comrades, and we'll make merry over a stein of schnapps and have a good laugh at the silly devils. And you had better do the same," said Casperl to his audience.



*The Watchman's Call*





## XVI

Plays in Black and White

When I was at the fair I saw  
A very curious kind of play.  
The story was not sad, and yet  
The actors all wore black and grey.

Within a lamp-lit, curtained room  
They stayed and there the play was played;  
We sat outside and saw them move  
Like shadows on the window shade.

We heard soft music from the room,  
Yet not a word the actors said,  
But only showed in silhouettes  
The story that the showman read.

It seemed to us as if, instead  
Of players acting on a stage,  
A picture book had come to life;  
Some fairy wand had touched the page.

## Plays in Black and White

BUT what became of the shadow-drama, the mysterious half-seen puppet play of the far East? Wandering Italian puppet showmen carried the shadow stage over the Alps to the people of Northern Europe, who named the flat puppets "Italian shadows," because all those they knew were Italian immigrants. Later the showmen in France and England called their entertainments "Oriental Shadows," and some by the name they had in the East, "Chinese Shadows."

But the shadow play of the West was not quite the same as that of the East. The coloured shadow puppets from the Orient never ventured into Europe beyond the boundaries of Turkish dominion. It was in black and grey silhouettes that the flat actors appeared when they journeyed out of Italy, for the Italian shadow play had come across the Mediterranean from Tunis, where the simple plays of Arabia were in fashion.

Even without the colours that gleamed in the Oriental puppet stage, the shadow drama was very beautiful. It had the charm of simplicity that all silhouette pictures have, even though the pictures moved. The early plays were like the familiar shadow pantomime of the school entertainments, where people acted behind a sheet stretched in a doorway, and their shadows moving on the curtain were seen by the audience in the darkened room, only the puppet shadow plays were in miniature. When the showman read the familiar ballad stories, the jerky movements of the

cardboard puppets kept time with the rhythm and added to the fun.

At first the subjects of the European plays were Oriental, but soon the shadow players, like the other puppet showmen, were forced to look about for new subjects and took them wherever they could find them. They brought their quaint humour with them from the East and were not slow to use it at the expense of any one who was unpopular with the public. Their method of commenting on current events is shown in the German play, "A Beautiful Shadow Play on the Wall, Presenting the Newest Affairs in the World," which was printed in 1805, the year in which Vienna was taken.

In this play the Austrian royal family are having a masquerade at their Tyrolese summer house in a shadowy grove. The Emperor Franz appears disguised as Nebuchadnezzar eating herbs. Just at this inopportune moment Alexander I. of Russia enters and announces that he has come for a visit. He recounts his political worries to the Austrian Emperor.

Franz declares airily that there is not the slightest reason for anxiety. "Everything is going delightfully," he declares, "and in a few weeks our troops will advance right into Paris. We will shove the French Emperor off his throne and walk away with his crown. I shall have Lorraine, Alsace, Brabant and Bavaria and also the Roman Land."

"Wait just a minute, before you annex any more territory," interrupted Alexander. "I shall be there too; we aren't going to drive all the game into your nets. The Roman Land is going to belong to me and to no other."



• Their shadows moving on the curtain. •



But Franz says, "What are you going to do with it, when you have it? Are you not satisfied yet? He should be more than satisfied who has already so much."

Then the Empress, who has been looking out of the window, protests, "Gentlemen, I beg you, control yourselves. I see General Mack galloping towards us."

"That poor fool," laughs Brother Johann. "How he does look! I really believe he is empty in the upper story."

But he stops laughing at once when he hears that General Mack has lost his army. "The French and the Bavarians are coming forward fast," cries the defeated warrior. "In fourteen days they will be in Vienna!"

Franz thinks it is about time to make peace and hopes to obtain terms that will insure safety for himself, but Alexander can only blame the ancient enemy. "That twice cursed English gold!" he cries. "Oh, you damned Britons! You never give us any peace and you live like the crabs in salt water."

While every one is running about and shouting that the French are coming, the curtain falls.

Most of the German playwrights who made dramas for the puppet stage tried their hand at the shadow play; and most of the puppet showmen gave silhouette plays as well. Sometimes a shadow scene was arranged at the back of a stage, like a play within a play. Visions and dreams were often shown this way, for the shadow puppets always seem so unreal that they are better actors than the rounded puppets in supernatural scenes. When Dr. Faustus entertained the Duke of Parma by summoning characters from the past, the spirits sometimes appeared as shadows.



The stages were frequently round, like the stage in Ben Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*, when Master In-and-In Medlay prepared a miniature masque of the wedding and explained exactly how his play was to be given.

“ ‘O Master In-and-In! What have you done?’  
 ‘Surveyed the place, sir, and design’d the ground,  
 Or stand-still of the work; and this it is.  
 First, I have fixed in the earth a tub. . . .  
 Now, sir, this Tub I will have capt with paper;  
 A fine oil’d lanthorn paper that we use,  
 Which in it doth contain the light to the business;  
 And shall with the very vapour of the candle  
 Drive all the motions of our matter about,  
 As we present them. For example, first,  
 The worshipful lady Tub . . .  
 Your ’squireship’s mother, passeth by (her huisher,  
 Master Pol Martin, bare-headed before her)  
 In her velvet gown . . .  
 I have exprest it here in figure, and Mistress Wispe,  
 her woman, holding up her train.’ ”

In this shadow play, the cardboard puppets, according to the ancient traditions of their race, travestied the play which the live actors had just finished. But they were compelled to retire with their tub stage at the command of the Lord Chamberlain, for Inigo Jones, the partner of Ben Jonson in the preparation of his court masques, took offence at their play. He suspected what was undoubtedly true, that Master-In-and-In was a caricature of himself, the famous scenic architect, and he appealed to the court for protection against the impudence of Jonson’s shadow puppets.

The English shadow plays were called "gallanty-shows," a name suggested either by the grandeur of the plays or by the fact that all "the gallants" attended them. The



"First the worshipful Lady Tub."

English name gallanty-show is seldom heard nowadays and in England the cardboard puppets never became serious rivals to Mr. Punch; indeed they often engaged the little clown to act as an assistant in the shadow theatres and advertised his absurdities as an extra attraction.

The shadow play that the English people loved was their Harlequin in the Shades, in which live actors appeared between the light and the screen. The performances, which were usually burlesque, were the same as the English pantomimes in which there was no screen to hide the bright colours in Harlequin's suit.

You went to see Little Red Riding-hood or Dick Whittington or Cinderella, but before the evening was over, Harlequin and Columbine and Pantaloon and the Clown would come tumbling in with their familiar cry, "Here we are again!" and you would know that the Policeman and the sausage shop were just around the corner. They usually came between the fairy tale and the wonderful transformation scenes. The extraordinary things that these light-hearted exuberant creatures did and endured, even having live ducks taken from their sleeves and rabbits from their ears, are much more convincing in a shadow pantomime than in a real play. This jolly quartette always behaved in much the same way. Harlequin danced back and forth through the wall and blew the fairy Columbine lightly across the stage. Pantaloon was still "lean and slippered," in spite of his enormous consumption of sausages, which he thriftily acquired, by theft, while the life-like Policeman kept his back turned on the scene of the crime.

Clown was always in difficulties with the Policeman's club; but he always defeated the Policeman by strategy and won so many laughs from his British audiences that he usurped the leadership Harlequin had in Italy. Clown became so important that Mr. Barrie's Pantaloon, when he discovered that his new grandchild was a Clown, almost

grew young again with joy. Clown was called Pierrot in France. His English name was Joey, after Joseph Grimaldi, the most famous clown of England.

These four characters must always have played the same parts, just as their ancestors did in Italy, for Mr. Barrie, who has immortalized them in *The Little White Bird*, always speaks of them as if they dressed and lived in private life exactly as they did on the stage. Certainly they acted on the stage exactly as if they were at home. You would have thought they were quite accustomed to dining and sleeping and quarrelling and stealing in the public eye. They played their sly jokes on each other and seemed no more to mind the mere public in the world behind the foot-lights than they did the terrific crashes of thunder and blinding flashes of light and dark that kept up throughout their performance as if the very elements were applauding these ancient and ever-young buffoons.

In the shadow pantomimes of course these humourists never talked except in gestures, a language they had known well in Italy. It is said that they became mute in the eighteenth century when the French royal house, to protect their favourite playhouse and opera, forbade the actors at other theatres either to speak or sing. So the players of the fairs and the Italian Comedy had to leave the stage or take to pantomime, and that is how Pantaloon and Pierrot and Columbine and Harlequin became deaf and dumb.

The English puppets were as ready as their Italian relatives to imitate Harlequin and his fellows. It was in the eighteenth century that the little shadow actors had their

greatest popularity in England. Philip Astley advertised Chinese Shadows under their French title, "Les Ombres Chinoises," in a room "commodiously prepared with a Pyramid of Lights over the Door and illuminated with Wax, for the Reception of the Nobility, Gentry and Others." The French shadow player, Ambroise, guaranteed the propriety of his plays. He announced, "The clergy can assist at any show, without scruple."

It was the time of the vogue of the silhouette, and the black portraits set the fashion for the silhouette plays as well. The little pictures cut out of paper that were so popular in the eighteenth century were named for Étienne de Silhouette, the controller-general of France, who was so economical that the French people made fun of him by calling all sorts of cheap things after him; and the inexpensive little paper portraits kept the name long after its original owner was forgotten.

Many of these pictures came to life in the shadow plays of the Russian-French artist, Caran d'Ache, who made exact likenesses of well known Parisians to appear riding on horseback, or in cabs, in his shadow representation of the afternoon return from the wood of Boulogne.

Caran d'Ache's plays were the first to be called French Shadows, which Prof. Brander Matthews calls the forerunner of the moving pictures. But as the French figures never gestured, these moving pictures had very little motion. In the French shadow plays, silhouetted figures posed in tableaux or glided across the stage in a continuous parade. In this way Caran d'Ache showed the soldiers of Napoleon's army as a silent procession in black and grey.

The Oriental shadow puppets with their bright-coloured insets were introduced into France by Henri Rivière, who provided suitable scenery for them with a magic lantern. Both Rivière and Caran d'Ache showed their plays in the Black Cat. So many artists who were patrons of this celebrated cabaret became shadow play enthusiasts that they made it famous as a puppet theatre.

One of the most artistic of the magic lantern plays was the shadow dramatization of Charles Quinel's poem "My Sheep." The play showed a herdsman standing silhouetted against the sunset sky, while he watched his sheep grazing in a quiet valley. A stranger appeared dressed as a pilgrim, and invited the shepherd to forsake his humble occupation and seek a prouder calling out in the world. The sky and the valley both grew dark, and slowly the towers of a great walled city appeared on a distant hill-top, the blue sea beating its waves against the crumbling city wall. The shepherd stood unmoved by this magic vision. He said, "I only want to guard my sheep."

The city paled and vanished, and the quiet valley appeared again, now green in the bright light of day. Then the stranger sang, and during the song, the valley faded and a glorious temple appeared, and before it the proud figure of the Goddess of Fame, striking her harp in time to the song:

"Who can tell if in the moon's pale gold,  
When we come home with our staffs to sleep,  
We may not bring glory and wealth untold?"



The shepherd answered, "I only want to guard my sheep."

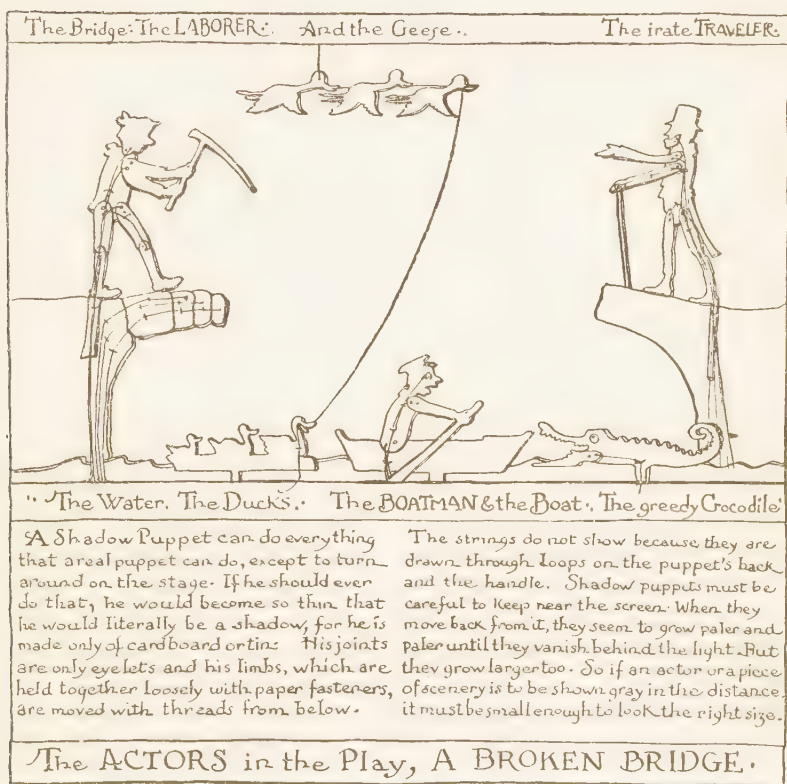
The vision of Fame disappeared. The music changed to a warlike march. The trumpets sounded, the sky reddened and a burning city flamed in the distance. Then for the first time the shepherd moved. He dropped his crook and shouldered his gun, and as he rushed off the stage he called out, "The faithful dogs will guard my sheep!" This patriotic conclusion always drew a storm of applause from French audiences.

The most imposing spectacle of all the French shadow shows was the play of *The Sphinx*, made by the composer, Fragerolle, and the artist, Vignola. The magic lantern threw the picture of the great Sphinx in the desert, which never moved throughout the performance, although the sky and the landscape back of it was changed by views from another lantern. Before this scene the shadows moved in large, silhouetted groups, the nations and people who had passed before the Sphinx since it stood in the desert, from the time when the statue's completion was celebrated by the Egyptian priests in a ceremonial dance. The Assyrians, the Jews, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Roman conquerors, all crossed the desert in shadows. There was an interlude that showed the Holy Family fleeing from the wrath of Herod, with the Sphinx all bathed in moonlight, and then the procession began anew, the Arabs, the Crusaders, Napoleon's army, and last of all, a parade of British soldiers keeping peace. When the last silhouette had passed, the Sphinx still remained, but there was ice and snow all about her and a wintry sky above, for mankind now had



vanished from the face of the earth and the world had grown cold.

The active Italian shadows were popular too in France.



They were first shown to the Parisians by Nicholas Audinot, a singer at the Italian Opera. Audinot quarrelled with his comrades and revenged himself by showing their silhouette likenesses in his little theatre at the fair of St. Germain.

The plays in which the lively Italian shadow puppets acted have lived longer than the moving tableaux of the typical French shadows. The father of these plays was the showman who was called "the Angel." "Seraphin" had wandered through Italy and Germany with strolling players in his youth. In 1784 he opened a permanent establishment at Versailles and later he set up his stage in the Royal Palace. Seraphin enjoyed the favour of the younger members of the royal family for many years and was even permitted to name his theatre "The Spectacle of the Infants of France."

The play he brought to Paris was a comedy called "The Broken Bridge," which was shown later at Philip Astley's theatre in London. Somehow this nonsensical little play came to America, and it is still being given wherever shadow entertainments are attempted by amateurs.

The setting is very simple, showing the Rhone river and the old bridge of Avignon above it, but not spanning it, for the bridge is broken in two at the middle. Ducks swim across in a row but the wayfarers who come to cross the stream all have to turn back. Presently a workman appears. He points out the break in the bridge and says it must be mended. He swings his pick violently and sings,



Fol - rol - di - rid - dle dol - de - day."

Meanwhile he wields his pick so vigorously that seemingly there will soon be very little left of the bridge. But he stops and wipes his brow, preparing to entertain the audience with a little dance, for the labourer is the Clown of this piece. As he dances, he sings the song that all French children know,

“On the bridge at Avignon,  
All go dancing,  
All go dancing.  
On the bridge at Avignon,  
All go dancing in a round.

“The gentlemen do this way  
And then again this way.”

The workman stumbles and almost falls forward when he tries to bow as the gentlemen do. But now he takes very tiny steps and crooks his arms daintily to show how the ladies dance.

“On the bridge at Avignon,  
All go dancing,  
All go dancing.  
On the bridge at Avignon,  
All go dancing in a round.

“The fine ladies do this way,  
And then again this way.”

In trying to imitate a lady courtesying, the labourer tumbles over backwards and picks himself up one joint at a time.

When a traveller approaches, the Clown ceases his dance and uses his pick vigorously. The newcomer is evidently in a hurry and explains in pantomime that he wishes to cross the bridge; but the labourer has grown very deaf and the only answer the traveller receives is the swinging of the pick. The traveller shouts and waves his arms; his jaw opens and shuts angrily. The labourer placidly continues his task. Finally he looks up and asks the distracted man on the opposite bank what he wants. He says he wants to cross, and receives the tuneful answer, "The bridge is broke and must be mended."

"How does one cross then?" asks the traveller.

"Oh, the ducks and the geese they all swim over," sings the workman to the same tune, wielding his pick in time to the music.

"How far is it across the stream?" calls the traveller.

And the answer is, "Oh! When you're in the middle, you're half way over."

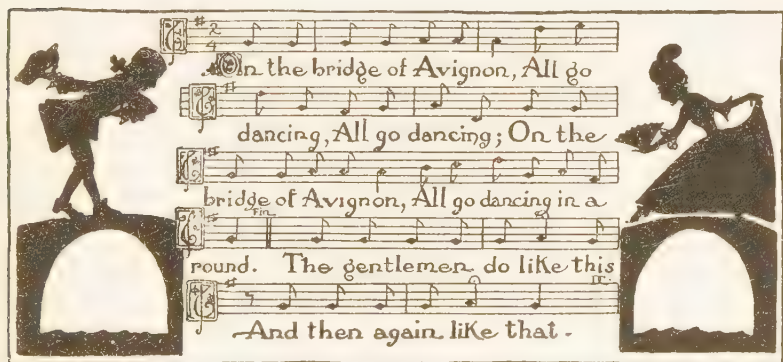
"How deep is the water?" shouts the desperate traveller.

"Oh, just throw in a stone, and you'll soon find the bottom, fol-rol, di rid-dle, dol-de-day."

Then a skiff appears, moving forward, as the cardboard boatman bends back and forth in time with his oars. The traveller hails him and makes a bargain to be carried over. But he insists that he will not pay for the trip until he is across the river. The boatman rows manfully half-way over the stream but then he becomes worried about his pay and demands money. There is an amusing little tussle, in which the traveller's stick and the boatman's oar take a very active part. Finally a crocodile swims into view and

opens his jaws, when immediately the boatman resumes his rowing and the skiff disappears from sight.

Throughout this diversion the labourer has been industriously "mending" the bridge with his pick, and now he swings it blindly regardless of direction. He carelessly breaks off the piece of stone on which he himself is standing and in spite of desperate struggles to save himself, he falls into the water with a great splash. The crocodile then opens his mouth and the disobliging workman evidently meets a well deserved fate, for the beast vanishes with part of the labourer still sticking out of his throat, but rapidly disappearing. What is left of the bridge still stands in silhouette. "The ducks and the geese, they all swim over" again and the curtain falls.





## XVII

### Amateur Puppets



“Once was I a manager myself,  
And played the ‘Miller and his Men’;  
My company—ah, happy elf!  
I had no trouble with them then—  
I stuck them on, and cut them out,  
I painted them with colours bright;  
I scattered tinsel-specks about,  
And made them things of beauty, quite—

How I revered the artist’s skill  
Who did my heroes represent—  
With scowls the very soul to thrill—  
With one leg straight and one leg bent!  
I loved his ladies full of grace,  
And on their beauties fondly dwelt;—  
My first pictorial love could trace  
Her pedigree to Park and Skelt.

Ah, me! ’tis many a year since I  
Those dear old plates—a penny plain  
And two-pence coloured—did espy;  
I ne’er shall see their like again!  
The world’s with disappointment rife,  
And I have far too often felt  
That actors now are less like life  
Than those I bought of Park and Skelt!”

From Henry S. Leigh’s verses  
in *London Fun*, 1868.

## Amateur Puppets

THE private life of a puppet actor is very dull. He travels about the country shut in a trunk with all his fellow players. Even Punch, who is usually so active, rests when he is on tour, "all slack and drooping in a dark box, with his legs doubled up round his neck, and not one of his social qualities remaining." Such a life would be quite unendurable if the actor were awake, but of course he is not, for a marionette can do nothing but sleep when there is no one ready to pull his strings, and Mr. Punch is never awake unless he is taken in hand.

As to home life, a professional doll actor has none. The only puppets who have homes are those fortunate ones who have been adopted by some one who could not resist the charm of the little mannikins and took them home "for the children." The puppets of the play room have a short life; but it is a merry one while it lasts. Although they are guided by less skilful hands than their professional brothers, their career is much more interesting. There is infinite variety in the repertory of their youthful masters and, while their audiences are small, the amateur puppet actors have very devoted friends.

In spite of their retirement from the lime-light, the domestic puppets have been more celebrated than the wooden actors of the professional stage. If there chanced to be an author among the circle of their friends, he could not

keep them out of his books, and so puppets who never left home have attained immortal fame through the companionship of the great.

The first puppets who found their way into private homes were the Bible characters. When the colored terracotta figures in the Nativity and Passion scenes left the Sanctuary, they took refuge in the houses of devout Italians, and when the little wooden figures, no less beautifully made by Alpine wood-carvers, were driven out into the cold they found a shelter under the branches of the Christmas tree. But the cribs were not plays; the actors in these tableaux did not move, so they cannot be said to have lived in the homes, for the only life a puppet has is when he is acting a play or rehearsing one; puppets can really live only in a home where there is a toy stage.

A toy stage is nothing like the elaborate platform with ladders and bridges, on which the puppets make their public appearance. It is a simple affair. It may be only a pasteboard or wooden box, set on end. All sorts of things can be made to do for a stage. Even a berry-crate has its virtues as a theatre. The advantage of a berry-crate stage is in the partition. When the case is set on end, the manager can show a scene upstairs and one downstairs at the same time. The hard-hearted father can have his ear to the floor of the upper room and hear the lovers in the parlour below planning their elopement.

In a four-room doll-house, one ingenious playwright and showman reproduced the life in a modern apartment house. The play showed a quarrel between the families who lived there, each one of whom blamed the others for everything

that went wrong in the building. The victims of all the misunderstandings and neighbourhood jealousies could not see each other; but the audience could look into all four



The toy stage may be just an over turned hat box with a proscenium opening cut in the bottom. The top, which is now at the back, can be removed to shift the pasteboard scenery out of the audience's sight

The actors are cut out of stiff paper. They stand on a long strip of the paper which is folded beneath them and extends out through the openings cut in the side of the box, so the stage manager can move them from the wings.

flats and, when the smoke came out of the Murphys' fire-place and they blamed the Edelsteins in the flat below, while the Edelsteins blamed the MacTavishes, who in their turn accused the Murphys of storing their potatoes in the chim-

ney and choking the flue, the audience could see all the time that the trouble was caused by the janitor's sitting on the chimney while he paid fulsome compliments to Mrs. Mac-Tavish's laundress, who was hanging the wash out on the roof.

A good stage can sometimes be found in the toy shop, where it always attracts more longing looks than any other toy; it may be built especially by some carpenter who knows what children of all ages like; but the ideal theatre is the one made at home.

With very simple equipment the little stage is prepared to take a prominent part in family life. The docile puppets are always ready to provide any entertainment their hosts desire. With puppet masques for every birthday and patriotic pageants for national holidays and wooden mummers at Christmas time, the home can be as festive as the Court of King James in the days of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones. Rainy days pass all too quickly in planning performances and rehearsing new plays for the little theatre.

When the stage is ready, "the next delightful task" is to make the inhabitants. They may be anything, from home-made paper dolls to elaborately jointed marionettes. Paper actors can be cut out of the magazines, and paraded before scenery made from the advertisements. Joy reigns in youthful dramatic circles when a magazine publishes real paper actors like Robert McQuinn's in *The Delineator*. His painted back drops and wings will change a shoe-box in a minute to Hamelin town, and the Pied Piper, the Mayor, the children and their bereaved parents, to say nothing of

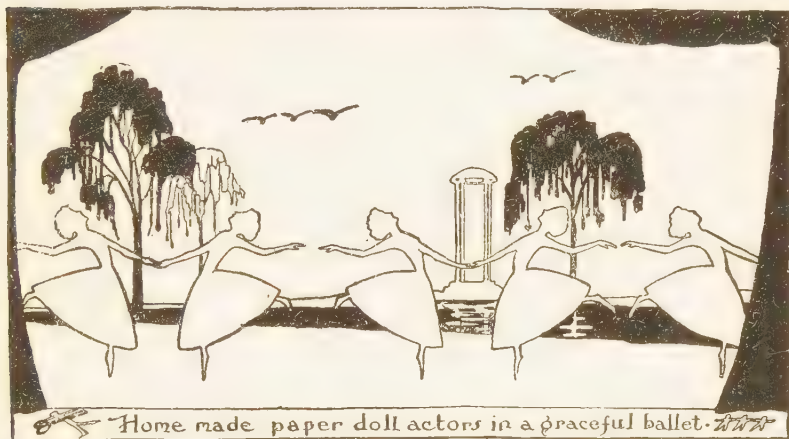


With puppet masques for every birthday



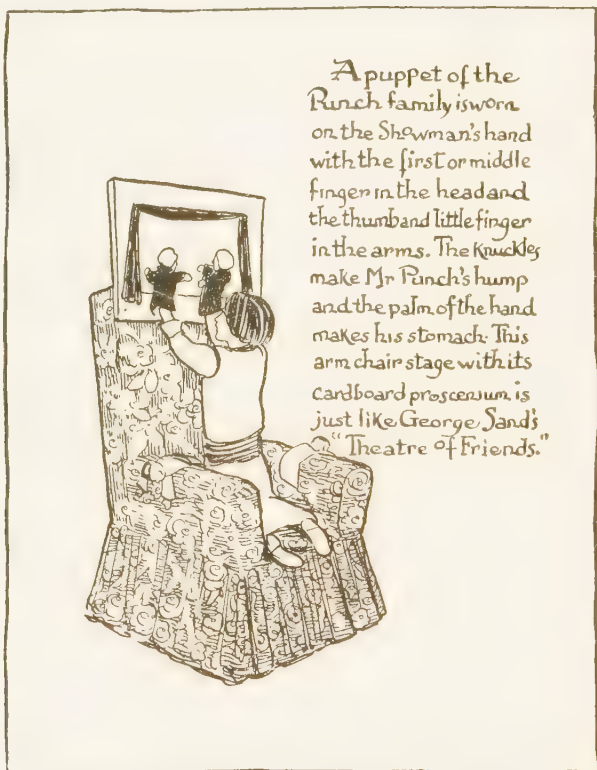


the rats, are all ready to be cut out and take their cues in the play. He has provided settings, costumes and actors for the plays in which the puppets have always been at their best, Snow White, The Sleeping Beauty, The Seven Brothers, who turned into white swans, and all the favourite fairy stories.



This is the kind of toy stage that Robert Louis Stevenson played with in his childhood. He "bought them all of Park and Skelt." The actors, scenery and properties came, printed on large sheets of thin cardboard, "a penny plain and two-pence coloured." The twopenny plays were emblazoned in gorgeous hues; but your two-pence was better spent, so Stevenson said, if you bought the penny sheet and daubed a penny's worth of Prussian blue, gamboge, and crimson lake upon it. These pasteboard actors and their paper-covered plays were known as Skelt's, later as

Pollock's, Juvenile Drama. Pollock advertised an impressive list of paper accessories for his toy plays, "Drop Scenes, Top Drops, Orchestras, Foot and Water Pieces, Single Por-



traits . . . Fairies, Horse Soldiers, Clowns, Rifles, Animals, Birds, Butterflies, Houses, Views, Ships, etc." Stevenson's favourite play was *The Miller and His Men*, which ended with a rousing scene, showing the mill exploding in gorgeous colours, painted on the back-drop, and flame

and smoke pouring out, and pieces of the mill and of the people sailing through the air.

There are more kinds of puppets than there are races of men. They are made of cardboard, wood, bone, ivory, papier-mâché, clay, leather, and cloth. If a play does not demand more than two people acting at once, the puppets of the Punch family, that are just a doll's head and a dress, make the most satisfactory actors. George Sand much preferred the hand puppets to the marionettes, for, she said, with the operator's own hands inside the puppet's head and arms, the actor became part of the showman, and the showman part of the actor, and the two felt and acted as one. Any one who has played with a Punch and Judy theatre knows that this is true. A marionette has not the limitations in its action, but it also has not the soul that belongs to the Punch family. There is a liveliness about the little English puppet that even the finest stringed actors do not have. They wobble, but he bustles, about the stage.

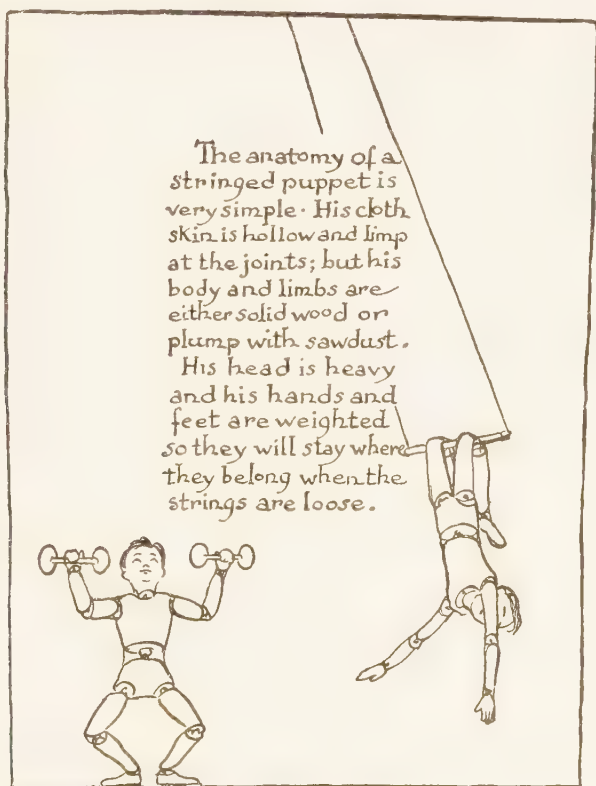
Of course the charm of puppets does not depend on their realism, especially if the audience and the showman are young enough not to have lost their imaginations. In the finest Punch and Judy performance I ever saw, the actors were nothing but quilts wadded over the showman's hands. The stage-manager had seen the swaggering hero in his great criminal rôle at the Dime Museum and had brought the play home to add to his dramatic repertory. He always remembered the entertainments he was taken to see, and presented them over and over again in the playroom. At the Dime Museum, he had acquired not only the lines of

the Punch and Judy play, but the measles, which he generously gave to his sister. When the two unfortunates were convalescent, the boy made a Judy out of the coverlet and a baby of the sheet, and, sitting up in bed, he put a quilted and blanketed Punch through his murderous part, while the audience, a little girl, who was still too sick to sit up in her bed, laughed through her tears, and the delighted doctor—the real one, not the one in the play—solemnly gave the cloth Judy and baby each a pill and brought them back to life.

Many a play has been given, with dressed-up potato or lollipop actors, that had in it more truly dramatic thrills than plays given by real people in a real theatre. Bottles, Indian clubs and even clothespins, travelling across the stage on a string, have substituted successfully for the puppets; and imaginative children have staged Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass with only playing cards and chessmen for actors. That most beloved of playmates, the rag doll, makes the finest of amateur actors. Its shoe-button eyes are always bright and intelligent, in spite of the vicissitudes an energetic stage-manager may force it to endure, and its placid rag face has a dignity like the expression that the puppets of antiquity wore on their painted wooden faces.

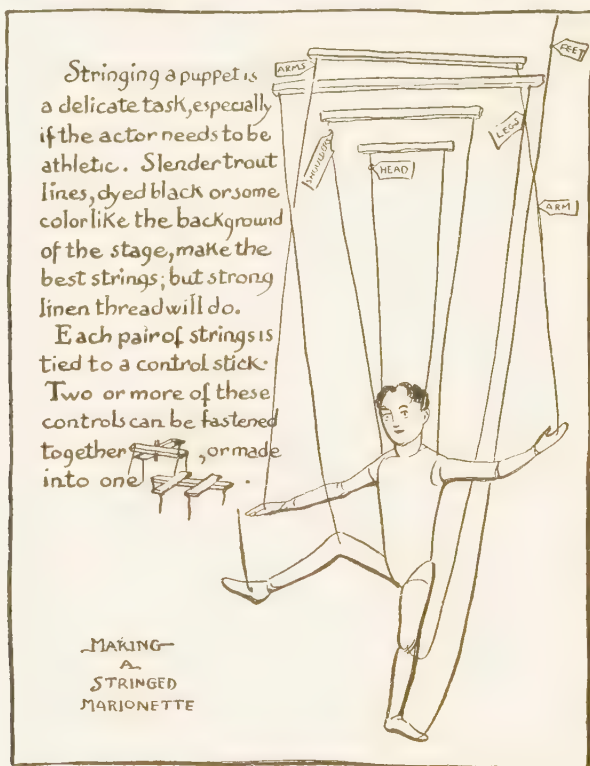
The cloth puppets are also the most limber of the marionettes worked by strings, and, strange as it may seem, work better than actors with stiffer joints. They often look better than their wooden relatives too, for they can be stuffed to such perfect symmetry. No one who has seen Tony Sarg's Rip Van Winkle could fail to notice the superi-

ority of Dame Van Winkle's plump, capable legs over her husband's stiff wooden pegs, which were the only inartistic thing in the heart-breaking scenes of Rip's return.



Stringing a marionette is a delicate task, especially if the actor needs to be athletic. And with ever so perfect a puppet to work, it takes practice to become a good showman. But, as experimentation is the chief fun of the Toy Stage, practice is as enjoyable as performance. Given an expe-

rienced manager, it is amazing what puppets can do. Where could you find among human musicians so accomplished a pianist as Tony Sarg's Princess Angelica in *The*



Rose and the Ring? She could express her emotions so well in music that, when she discovered that her adored Bulbo was not listening to her solo, but was making love to the beautiful Betsinda instead, she flew into a jealous rage, struck several false chords, and then banged on the keys with both feet.



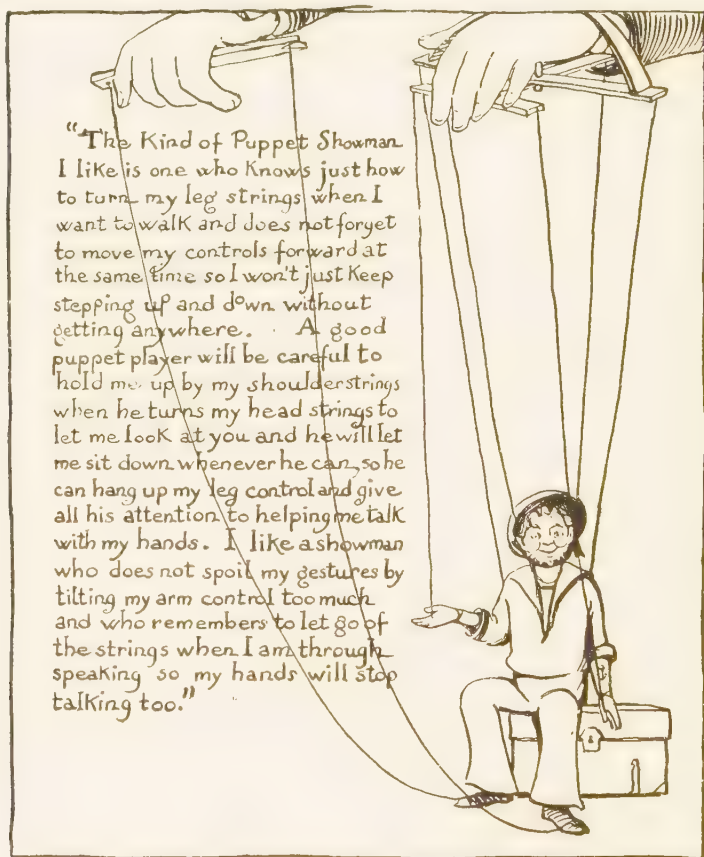
One of the puppets' greatest accomplishments is their agility as dancers. They fall into such marvellous poses and their motion is so free of effort. They can bend so easily and so far back, and kick so high, and balance themselves so lightly. They can twirl as gracefully as spinning tops, and never grow dizzy at all. The Italian puppet dancers were so human that the Roman police required the dress of wooden ballet dancers to conform to the law that regulated the costumes of living performers. Charles Dickens described them perfectly, in his *Pictures from Italy*. "The way in which they dance; the height to which they spring; the impossible and inhuman extent to which they pirouette; the revelation of their preposterous legs; the coming down with a pause on the very tips of their toes, when the music requires it; the gentleman's retiring up, when it is the lady's turn; and the lady's retiring up when it is the gentleman's turn; the final passion of a pas-de-deux; and the going off with a bound. I shall never see a real ballet with a composed countenance again."

In the more formal minuet the marionettes charm their audiences as easily as they do with their livelier antics in the ballet. But there is no dance they have not attempted. The puppets performed "jigs, sarabands and country dances, to the admiration of the spectators," at least so the advertisement said, in the play, *The Old Creation of the World*, at Bartholomew Fair.

Dancing is the best way a marionette can learn to manage his strings. If his guardian angel holds him by the head or trunk-wires, to preserve the dancer's balance, and idly



pulls different strings, the puppet will assume all sorts of postures and soon teach his master how to manage him.



### *The Best Way to Get On with a Puppet.*

The size of marionettes differs greatly, but if puppets are less than the height of a ruler, their limbs are too small to be easily controlled with strings, and if they are much more

than two feet high, they are too heavy and clumsy for the puppet players to manage. There need be no fear of the puppets' looking too small. So easily do our eyes adjust themselves to relative size that, after the first few minutes of a play, actors who are only two feet in height will appear like real people. When the director of Tony Sarg's puppets appears on the stage with his actors, he seems like a giant. At one performance the back of the little stage-setting fell down and revealed part of the bridge, where the puppet-players stood. The operators' legs and feet looked as huge as tree trunks.

When you have experimented with a toy stage to the extent of attempting to manage a marionette, there is very little hope for you. You will cease to dramatize familiar stories, and will search the library for a real play. If you do not find what you want, you will even write one yourself. You will soon begin to scour the toy-shops for doll bureaus and beds and chairs, to furnish the little stage, and for jointed animals to take part in the plays. You will rummage the family piece bag and courageously ask for large samples of silk and velvet from haughty clerks, though they look sternly at you as if they knew that you do not intend to buy the goods but only want enough to costume your small actors. You will delve into the mysteries of dress design and study interior decoration and architecture, and even undertake to paint scenery.

The scenery of the old puppet plays was usually over-elaborate, or when it was simple, it was crude and bare. Modern audiences, who are accustomed to beautiful settings and lighting, would not be satisfied with such rude simplic-

ity. The stiff rectangular setting in the toy theatres of the stores are like the old stage sets, too realistic and detailed to be beautiful. Simple backgrounds are best for the puppet stage. A shadowy forest of only a few trees can be made with coloured light to seem as haunted with mystery and terror as the Catskill wood in Tony Sarg's play of Rip Van Winkle. But if the scenic artist had tried to paint as many tiny trees as there really are trees in a forest, the wood-scene would have looked as if a box of matches had lined up for parade.

The setting and properties must be the right size for the actors; if the people on the stage can step over the buildings and trees, or cannot reach the fire-place and tables, or have to bend down to look out of the window, they will not seem like rational human beings.

The most important thing about the setting is the way it is lighted. The puppets of olden times played their parts only in the sunshine of the street corners or in the flickering light of primitive lamps. In this respect their human actor friends were no better off. The drama of the twentieth century, however, is the drama of electricity. Light floods the stage and glorifies the plays with colour. So if puppets are to keep their place by the side of the human actors, attempting everything that their models do, they must have their homes well-lighted.

Puppet stages for public performances are frequently wired and provided with footlights, borders, strips, floods, and all the paraphernalia that an amateur electrician can command; but for lighting the home theatre no such elaborate equipment is needed. Although electricity is con-

venient, it is not necessary for a small stage. A lantern borrowed from an amateur photographer's dark room gives a bright enough illumination and a magic lantern makes a good spotlight. Harold Connell's Pageant of the Discovery of the New World is lighted by such simple means as that, yet it is one of the most elaborate productions ever staged in a toy theatre, and one of the most effective from the standpoint of colour and lighting. Christopher Columbus appears at eleven different times of day in eleven different kinds of weather. These atmospheric conditions are all produced by placing coloured glass or translucent paper in front of the light. A piece of blue paper transforms the bright light of reality to dim, dreamy moonlight and a sheet of green tissue paper causes a rainstorm.

One does not need theoretical knowledge of colour to manage the lights in a toy stage. It is better to try the effect of various colours and discover for one's self how the result changes than to follow any fixed recipe for managing coloured lights. Experimenting with stage effects is an absorbing pastime and a puppet showman must be apt at devising scenic wonders. If he is not ingenious, necessity will soon make an inventor of him. He will learn to create forest fires and volcanic eruptions from nothing more terrible than a box of Chinese parlour fireworks; and with a small pair of bellows he will raise a terrific sandstorm in the desert or cover his stage with snow drifts of white paper; and by tossing a few Japanese paper blossoms, that open when they touch water, into a saucer, he will cause magic flowers to bloom miraculously in a fairy pool. But when it comes to making the moon rise and the wind sigh in the

trees, the water lap on the shore, the thunder roll and the lightning flash, without the apparatus which the professional stage possesses for producing these phenomena, the amateur showman will need to try a great many experiments before he can invite an audience to see his play.

And before a public performance can be given, an orchestra must be provided, even if it is nothing more than a comb, or a jew's-harp, or an accordion. An old-fashioned music box will produce an ideal overture for the puppets; it is just mechanical enough to harmonize with the jerky motions of the marionettes, and puppet music should be dainty and tinkling. If there is no music box in the household, and no musician, the faithful family phonograph will do for an orchestra. Ernest Ehlert's Chinese puppets, Ching and Chang, of Berlin, danced to the music of the phonograph with exquisite grace. The mechanically perfect time of the music and the jerky motion of the puppet figures kept together so well that neither seemed mechanical.

The puppets have quite a catalogue of their own music. There is Gounod's Funeral March of a Marionette with its sad refrain, "Sawdust to dust," and there is The March of the Puppets in Tschaikowsky's Nut Cracker Suite, where the dolls come to life for just one hour. While Schumann's album of children's pieces was not written for dolls, it is appropriate for the little theatre. Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Romberg, Reinecke and Haydn composed symphonies for toy orchestras. Haydn's Toy Symphony was suggested by the sounds heard at a country fair, the regular haunt of Punch's German cousins. It is written for the violin, the rattle and triangle, the trumpet and drum, and

the cuckoo of the cuckoo clock. Those squeaking birds, the quail and the nightingale, that are sold at the German annual markets, take part in it too. They are all admirable instruments for a toy orchestra and so are the delicate flute and piccolo. Very few amateur showmen will feel that they need such a large orchestra, as so few professional showmen employ them; but we need not spare expense or style when we are planning a play on paper.

Haydn wrote his *Toy Symphony* and four of his marionette operas at the country estate of Prince Nicholas Esterhazy at Eisenstadt. For the entertainment of the Prince's guests, there were two theatres, one for living actors and the other for marionettes. The Prince kept a company of real actors in his employ, and another of opera singers, besides his troupe of puppets, and an orchestra to accompany them and a poet to provide them with plays. The marionette theatre was built like a grotto, with glistening stones and bright coloured shells set in the walls. For this little theatre, Haydn composed *Philemon and Baucis*, a little "play with music" which was given at the celebration held in honour of the Empress' visit to Esterhazy. Haydn wrote the fourth part of *Genievre* and the parody opera, *Dido*, for the marionettes and he composed an overture and between-act music for a puppet play with the melodramatic title, *The Desire for Revenge Punished, or The House that Burned Down*. In his youth, at Vienna, he had composed another marionette opera, *The Devil on Two Sticks*. Unfortunately none of these compositions survive, except the overture and one little song from *Philemon and Baucis*. But there are many operettas



and light operas which can easily be adapted to the marionettes. In fact, there are some in which the puppets would be more successful as actors than human beings are. How easily the doll actors could present Babes in Toyland, for instance, and how well their jerky motions would fit the choppy Japanese music of *The Mikado*; and, as for the *Love of the Three Oranges*, recently presented, the puppets could not fail to make a success of it, as they did in Italy two hundred years ago. Mozart's *Bastien and Bastienne*, with puppets for the actors and with singers as managers, has been revived in Paris by the marionette enthusiasts and the Little Theatre in Brussels opened with the same opera. In light opera, puppets can do nothing but charm, they are so quaintly humorous.

If the puppets are going in for opera, the manager must have quite a collection of voices, either himself, or among his helpers, for it is necessary not only to warble a dainty soprano for the heroine, to roar for the blustering villain, and emit thrilling deep bass tones for the hero, but to sing in a different voice for every other character. Even in a play, where singing is not required, a solitary manager needs to practice ventriloquism.

There is one advantage in having only one puppet player; he can move but one actor at a time. When there is an amateur operator for every puppet, the managers are apt to be forgetful and let those actors who are not speaking, and should be quietly listening to another puppet's speech, wobble, or have a nervous chill, or do something equally attractive to take the attention of the audience away from the puppet who has the floor.



Now when the show is all ready and the play is advertised and the tickets printed and sold, the great moment has arrived. Everything is arranged in perfect order, every piece of scenery and every property placed where it is handy, all the actors correctly costumed and ready for their cue, hanging in the exact order of their appearance so the excited showman cannot make a mistake in the darkness and swing a pirate onto the stage instead of the minister. Playing with a toy stage is one thing, but a puppet-show given before an audience is a different matter. To be behind the scenes at any amateur performance is always an exciting experience. How much more thrilling it is when the stage manager cannot share his responsibility with the actors. He has all the cares and trepidation for himself. Fortunately he is too busy to have much time for anxiety, for the showman must be everywhere at once if the play is to be given without hitches.

Of course if the audience does its duty too, any slight delays or accidents that may occur will pass unnoticed. No one should ever go to a puppet show unless he knows what not to see, and he must never imply by laughter or applause of accidents that he thinks the performers are not human enough to mind his rudeness.

Fortunately the wooden actors are not subject to stage fright and neither is the showman, for he does not have to face the audience, and they would not pay any attention to him if he did, for they would be too busy watching the puppets. And if there is a hitch in the performance, he can hide his blushes behind the scenes. Many a boy who, if he had to appear in a play, would be prevented by knocking

knees and chattering teeth from speaking his single part, can manage a half dozen actors and recite all their lines without a tremor, behind the sheltering curtains of the puppet stage.

The toy theatre does not develop actors; it is the stage managers, playwrights and dramatic critics who acknowledge the little stages as their training grounds in the period when their tastes were being formed. Brander Matthews gave a Punch and Judy show before he was sixteen. Goldoni played with puppets at his grandfather's country estate. Carlo Gozzi presented plays in a miniature theatre when he was a boy. Goethe tells in his memoirs how he worked in his armory, costuming his puppets for the stage his grandmother had given him at Christmas. His first play was written for the little actors. He called it "The Newly Opened Moralizing Political Puppet Play, with Hans Wurst, or Jack Pudding."

It is a liberal education to give an entertainment with puppets. It is like leading an orchestra and playing every instrument too. The showman is the stage manager, scene-shifter, electrician, property-manager, mistress of the wardrobe, call-boy, prompter, orchestra, the voice of the actors and often the audience too, all in one person. It is not surprising that so many dramatists and play producers have a toy stage somewhere in their pasts, for when they were preparing plays in their little theatres, they were doing exactly what a stage manager does when he makes a small model to see how his settings and lights and grouping of actors will look.

In France the Paris Opéra stage models are so highly

appreciated that for more than fifty years, the government has ordered them to be kept. In the United States a few students of dramatic literature are preserving model stages in the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University. There is Winthrop Ames's model for *Prunella* and Robert Edmond Jones's set for *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* and Belasco's detailed copy of Peter Grimm's sitting-room. There are also miniature re-creations of ancient theatres, the platform of Plautus' Comedies, where every character has a house, even if it is only a Roman door-way, and the terrifying French Mystery stage, with all the stations from Heaven to Hell. The collection contains small copies of almost every stage in history.

The historic value of puppet plays is not limited to their dramatic interest. The doll actors pose in the museums to show the life of other times, and it is to be hoped that they will be generously received in these rôles, for such miniature sculptures as Dwight Franklin's are infinitely superior to the crude life-sized figures in the ordinary museum group.

The puppets are teaching history in the schools too, dressing up as Pilgrims, or as Washington's army, and posing before a stage-set made in the drawing hour. The Seven Little Sisters are often puppet stars in dramatized geography lessons. School work is a pleasure when there is a toy stage in the classroom. Writing plays and songs for puppets is so much fun that the children forget it is an exercise in language. The actors must have neatly sewed costumes and furniture made skilfully in Manual Training. The toy theatre is also an incentive to the study of litera-

ture, fine art and music. That the little stage is an educator wherever it is found should be a recommendation for it with those people who do not think that just to be amusing is enough excuse for the puppets' existence.

## XVIII

Long Live the Puppets!

“Fair ones who do all hearts command,  
And gently sway with fan in hand  
Your favourite—Punch a suppliant falls,  
And humbly for assistance calls;  
—Now, fair ones, if e’er I found grace  
Or if my jokes did ever please,  
—Your charms I’m sure can never fail  
Your eyes must influence, must prevail;  
—Get us a license now to play,  
And we’ll in duty ever pray.”

From *Punch's Petition to the Ladies*,  
by Jonathan Swift.

## Long Live the Puppets!

Is this the end of the puppets' story, or will there be sometime a chapter about their career in America? Will some hero as noble as Saint George of England or as Orlando of Sicily make our puppet stage famous? Will there be a jovial Yankee clown as light-hearted as Casperl or as light-footed as Harlequin to make us laugh, or an unhappy puppet lover like Hisamatsu to make us weep? Or will, perhaps, a villain as lovable as Punch some day strut about the American city parks and country fairs? The future will tell.

In America the puppets have no past. The only native marionette drama is that of the Indians, who carried stringed dolls in their weird religious ceremonies. The story of American puppets begins, like all American history, on the other side of the water. The gallant Mexican puppets are descendants of the Spanish wooden heroes, and most of the puppets that have appeared in the United States have been immigrants from overseas. The heroic marionettes of Sicily came to the United States in the steerage with their owners; but neither their plays nor their audiences are American and probably they will not survive the second generation. One adventurous Karageuz journeyed across the ocean and appeared in the coffee houses of Chicago's Greek colony as a shadow flickering



on the screen. But he was a stranger in a strange land and vanished, like the shade that he was, in the light of American freedom. When the German toy stage came over in the immigration of the seventies, its ornate cardboard structure soon succumbed to Yankee wear and tear. The wonderful automatic figures that usurped the puppets' place in France were imported into this country and American ingenuity improved on them mechanically, though not artistically. But mechanical toys are not dramatic; they are only marvellous. Mister Punch himself sojourned here for a time, but we did not make his visit profitable enough to keep him with us long.

Why American children did not take Punch to their hearts is a question. It may be as Prof. Brander Matthews suggests, that the descendants of the austere Puritans could not tolerate the joyous crimes of the arch-criminal or see the humour in his wicked jests. But there were many Puritans who never left England, and their grandchildren patronized the little puppet villain. Even the Scotch Presbyterians enjoyed seeing his murders, although it is recorded by Mr. Barrie in *Sentimental Tommy* that when Mr. McLean had sent all the way to Redlintie to invite Mr. Punch to his wedding, "nevertheless there was a probability of no performance, for Miss Ailie considered the show immoral. Most anxious was she to give pleasure to her pupils, and this she knew was the best way, but how could she countenance an entertainment which was an encouragement to every form of vice and crime?"

Various dignitaries of the town were consulted, including the Little Minister, but none could see a way out of the

difficulty. "Then," says Mr. Barrie, "Tommy appeared on the scene, and presently retired to find a way.

"He found it. The performance took place, and none of the fun was omitted, yet neither Miss Ailie—tuts, tuts, Mrs. McLean—nor Mr. Dishart could disapprove. Punch did chuck his baby out at the window (roars of laughter) in his jovial, time-honoured way, but immediately thereafter up popped the showman to say, 'Ah, my dear boys and girls, let this be a lesson to you never to destroy your offsprings. Oh, shame on Punch, for to do the wicked deed; he will be caught in the end, and serve him right.' Then when Mr. Punch had walloped his wife with the stick, amid thunders of applause, up again bobbed the showman: 'Ah, my dear boys and girls, what a lesson is this we see, what goings on is this? He have bashed the head of her as should ha' been the apple of his eye, and he does not care a—he does not care; but mark my words, his home it will now be desolate, no more shall she meet him at his door with kindly smile, he have done for her quite, and now he is a hunted man. Oh, be warned by his sad igsample, and do not bash the head of your loving wife.'"

Surely there are plenty of American boys ingenious enough to suggest improvements like Tommy's, and protect their little hero, if they really loved him. It is likely that he failed in America for the other reason that Prof. Matthews suggests, because he grew lazy and dull and depended too much on the same old play and the same old jokes and never learned any new ones.

Punch's Italian cousins have been better received in America than other puppets. They were brought into the

country by artists who fell in love with the burattini when they were travelling in Italy. They built stages for the little actors, and made companions for them to play with and dramas for them to play; and it is very likely that something really will come of this. The most famous of these puppets are the actors of Tony Sarg, who have amused the artist's friends for many years both in England and Amer-



ica. They were the first marionettes to go on tour in this country. Mr. Searle, their "Uncle Charles," is their chap-eron, and they have joined forces with a company of ancient Italian puppets and a group of Spanish actors to present the amusing adventures of Don Quixote. The puppets from Spain are an aristocratic company who are so perfect in appearance and so easy in their manner that it is a pleasure for all puppet lovers to see them.

There are many puppet actors who have not yet ventured away from their home stages. The Chicago Little Theatre

offered its house first to the wooden players and since then they have appeared in nearly every city where an experimental playhouse is to be found. Since Mr. Sarg's puppets have become famous, many immigrant puppets have come out of the trunk in the attic and joined the family circle. Well disciplined German marionettes are playing in small Wisconsin towns, and in foreign homes of New York, Kasparek, the puppet wife-beater from Bohemia, is quarrelling with his spouse, Kapulinka, and with a Czech devil.

Certainly the puppets must be taken seriously. Books are being written about them; their pictures are appearing in the magazines; interviews with them are constantly being printed in the newspapers. They are associating with learned people; in college they are trying out the efforts of the students of playwriting.

Dolls are as much the rage as they were in the eighteenth century. They cover telephones, powder-puffs and lamps. They pose in the shop-windows, imitating the French fashion dolls, who trace their ancestry back to the fourteenth century. The puppets are in society. Harlequin and Columbine appear with the coffee and dessert to amuse the guests, just as they did in Italy in the days of the Medicis. Punch and the marionettes are playing in the Follies.

Actors regard the puppets with so much respect that they often study the ways of the little Thespians and copy them. Those great pantomimists, the Russian dancers, often impersonate the marionettes. In their dance, The Carnival, Pierrot, Harlequin and Columbine pirouette and pose before a back drop that is topped by a design of such huge pattern that it makes the dancers seem, by contrast, as tiny as the little

Italian dolls they are imitating. They mimic Harlequin again in *Petrouchka*, or *Peterkin*, the name the Russians have given him. *Petrouchka* is jealous because the beautiful lady doll, whom he loves, admires a gorgeously attired blackamoor. The successful rival is the black nigger doll that comes with all Punch and Judy shows.

In England the puppets have returned to the boards, and in Germany they are playing all their old rôles, and *Dr. Faust*



and *Casperl* have recently come back to life. The marionettes are still well patronized in Italy, and Harlequin and his company have presented *The Love of the Three Oranges* again at the Children's Theatre in Rome. In France during the fall of 1915, the puppets ventured into the front lines. Some of the French soldiers, guarding the forests of Champenoux and Parroy, arranged a puppet tableau in honour of the seven chasseurs of Domêvre who held a bridge against the attack of many times their number of

Germans. The soldier artists built a two-foot arched bridge of pebbles on a knoll and arranged a channel so that, when it rained, water flowed under the bridge. Here with their wooden guns the seven puppet heroes, dressed in red and blue scraps from their makers' uniforms, stood firmly, while twenty wooden Germans in grey uniforms lay dead and dying before them and three others ran away. To a near-by tree were tacked these verses written by some French doughboy poet.

"There were seven chasseurs of Domêvre,  
Who were so astoundingly brave,  
When the Germans attacked,  
They were thoroughly whacked,  
'See that!' said the men of Domêvre."

The puppets enlisted in America too, when a group of artists, members of the Division of Pictorial Publicity, made a puppet tableau to show the work of the Salvation Army in France. On the painted panels at the back of the stage they suggested the distant battle by a sky reddened with exploding shrapnel. In the foreground was a miniature Salvation Army hut, ingeniously camouflaged, and inside it puppet Salvation Army lassies were seen frying doughnuts for the hungry doughboys straggling from the trenches so wearily that no one who saw them could fail in responding to the appeal for "dough."

When more puppets go into the advertising business, we will know that the doll actors have become thoroughly Americanized. So far, American interest in puppets has been largely on the manager's side. Artists and dramatists have



been so absorbed in the fascination of housing and training the marionettes that they have thought very little of any success for their actors, except that of artistic perfection. But if the puppets make a place for themselves in the American drama, it will be when they have enthusiastic patrons as well as enthusiastic managers and the American puppet actors have yet to acquire large audiences. It is true that very few people in America have had the opportunity to see really fine puppets in fine plays, for the crude little flat-headed, rag-doll marionettes that have been shown in the vaudeville houses belong to a plebeian class. It is a fact too that the productions that have been seen are still in the experimental stage; and the general public has not a great interest in experiments; the public wants results.

It is also true that a great many people will not like the marionettes at first. This is because they are not used to them and, if you are not used to puppets, there is no doubt that they seem very queer. The jerkiness of their gestures, the way they tremble and stagger before they start to go anywhere, the way they twitch when they have finished a speech, the way they sit down first and then sail about the stage in a sitting posture until they find a chair—all these mannerisms are very distracting to people who are not used to them, and may spoil the play for those whose sense of humour is too ready, or whose imagination is not equal to the strain of ignoring such trifles.

Even if the spectators are willing to overlook the oddities of the wooden actors, still at first acquaintance the audience is inclined to be unduly interested in the mechanism of marionette plays. The wires obtrude themselves into the



place of the plot. But after the patrons have seen two or three performances, they take the machinery for granted, although interest in the control of the puppets will never wear away for those who have a good deal of curiosity. The only way for such people to be truly satisfied is to see



The ridiculous gait of the puppets.

the performance three times, once to enjoy the play, once to conjecture how it is done, and once behind the scenes, that is if they can persuade the puppet showman that it is a better business policy to let people see the mysteries of puppetry than to guard the secrets of the craft so carefully.

Even when one is well acquainted with puppets, it is a

little difficult to ignore the ridiculous gait of the marionettes. They either lift one foot after another with stiffly bent knees, like a cat on a sheet of fly-paper, or they trip across the stage on their tiptoes, or they shuffle about without taking a step, and maybe sail through the air, "walking around without touching the ground." Although many puppet men have struggled with the difficulty, as yet no one has been able to do much toward improving the puppets' walk. Bartholomew Neri tried fixing the marionettes in groves and directing their movements from beneath the stage in a manner similar to Doctor Dondo's puppets. Actors directed in this way were supposed to have a dignity and grace superior to that of the stringed marionettes, especially in tragedy, but this method merely makes the puppets glide across the floor; and when the strings are pulled from beneath the stage to bring the puppets' feet down, the actors walk as if they were continually going upstairs and thought there was one more step than there really was.

The only thing to do is to close our eyes to all imperfections. We must take the puppets as they are, as we must take people as we find them, if we are to have any pleasure from their society. We must realize that, in spite of their great likeness to us, the puppets are of a different race. They have their own way of getting about and of expressing their ideas; and we must not find fault with it because it is not ours. We must remember too that every art has its limitations, which must be accepted, and that every form of drama has its conventions, which would seem very strange to us if we were not used to them. Those who can

recall their first experience with the motion-pictures will remember how difficult it was not to be interested in the machinery at the expense of the story. Now no one notices the peculiarities of the screen drama. It might even seem very queer to people of some other time than this to be sitting in the audience and watching the actions of people in a room which has only three closed sides. We would smile at the idea, if we were not so used to it. Audiences soon become accustomed to the stiffness of puppets and notice it no more than they do the mannerisms of a popular actor. After all, why should we have marionettes if we cannot tell them from other people?

The astonishing thing is that puppets are as much like real people as they are. Sometimes they are so human they are almost uncanny. And the number of things they seem to do, that they really do not do, is surprising. We are told by the faithful Spanish biographer of Don Quixote that the puppet lady, Melisendra, wiped off a kiss, and disgustingly moistened her lips. Even though the Spanish puppets are the most natural of all wooden actors, how much of all that could she really have done? Yet she must have convinced her audience. It will not do to leave your imagination at home when you go to a puppet play.

It must be admitted by the most ardent lovers of puppets that the toy actors have their disadvantages; but these are not serious drawbacks. At first it is difficult not to be annoyed by the monotonous expression on the players' wooden faces, by their perpetual stare or unceasing smile. A puppet must always laugh, scowl, or gape as he is painted. He cannot show the changing expression that flits across the

countenance of a human actor. However, before the days of brilliant lighting, the expressions on the actors' faces could not be seen at a distance. The playwrights were obliged to tell the characters' feelings in their lines. Shakespeare even made his verses announce the place, the time of day and the weather, things that nowadays are shown with painted settings and light. If the puppets choose this method of showing their feelings in words, we ought not to expect them to change the expression on their faces too. Their features are no more immobile than the grotesque masks that the actors wore in the Greek dramas. The Greek masks were carved and painted with an eternally woful frown or a never-ending grin of joy. The actors could not even change the inflection of their voices through the megaphone of the mask. Punch never changes the expression on his face either, and it is anything but merry, yet we always think of him as the merriest kind of a fellow. His ugly temper makes us laugh and so we remember him as a jolly clown. After all, there is no comedian so funny as the one who keeps his face perfectly straight.

Another disadvantage of puppets is that they cannot carry on a conversation of short speeches, for it is too difficult for the puppet player to shift from one set of strings to another rapidly. The actor who is speaking must always gesture or shake his head so the audience will know which doll is doing the talking; you will always find a puppet emphasizing his remarks in some way. The habit of gesturing and making long speeches tend to make the wooden actors seem didactic; but as all puppets are afflicted with the same fault and as they are bound to be excellent listeners and not move

a finger while another puppet is talking, unless their strings should become tangled beyond control, they get along very well together.

There are many ways in which puppets are superior to human actors. They can hit each other over and over again without being hurt. They can leap into the air as high as the stage will permit and fall hard without injury. Oliver Goldsmith almost broke his leg trying to prove that he could jump over a broomstick as gracefully as a puppet, so Boswell said. But he failed ignominiously. The mariochettes can throw themselves out of joint and juggle their legs and arms about and toss their heads into the air and catch them again. They can grow enormously tall and then short again like Alice in Wonderland. Old puppets can grow young, like the Countess Gruffanuff in *The Rose and the Ring*, just by lifting up an extra face and stowing it away inside her high head-dress. What human actor could do that, or what real husband could turn into a door-knob as easily as the Countess' lord and master accomplished that feat?

Puppet animals are the most perfectly trained actors in the world. They do not have to be coaxed or whipped; they will obey every pull of their strings; and they show real interest in everything that is done in the play. Rip Van Winkle's dog, Wolf, is the best animal actor ever seen on the American stage, unless it is Sancho Panza's mule, or Don Quixote's horse, Rosinante. The parrot, Profanity, is one of the most interesting conversationalists that ever appeared in a play, in spite of the fact that he is "the kind of a bird that never spoke a naughty word."

The puppet animals do not need many joints and strings to be lively actors. They dance with as much grace as any other puppets. Nothing more charming has ever been staged than the pastoral scene in *Don Quixote*, where in the golden morning light, while the shepherd plays his pipe, "the young lambs bound." A marionette horse can be in truth a prancing steed. But puppet horseback riders are veritable centaurs and can keep their seats in spite of the gymnastics of their mounts. What if the wooden actors should fall? They could not be hurt; and as they are hard to break, they can be as daredevil as they please.

With such acrobatic animals and with puppet riders and trapeze performers as fearless as they are, a marionette circus ought to be a thrilling thing to witness, if only some enterprising manager would bring one to town. The stringed actors are the most adhesive rope-walkers in the world. Puppet jugglers can perform feats that are impossible for human beings; puppet contortionists can twist and bend in all directions; puppet strong men can lift weights many times their own; and stringed conjurers can do the most astonishing things, pulling all sorts of birds and animals out of the sky. The puppet actors have every variety-show and music-hall accomplishment.

A puppet can sing just as well as his operator can. Mr. Sarg's company are all accomplished musicians and entertain each other very often by singing solos and duets. The way they throw out their chests and the way they hold their sheet of music in their hand and never look at it, the way they growl in the bass with their chins sunk into their collars and throw their heads back and rise on their tiptoes



for the high notes, is so exactly like the real concert singers that it seems as if the song must be pouring from the puppets' lips, instead of coming from behind the scenes.

Once as an introduction to a puppet play, I saw and heard a marionette piano solo. It was a very realistic performance. The curtain rose, showing a doll's piano. Behind it hung another curtain in dark green folds, which opened to admit the entrance of the little pianist, a perfect concert-player in miniature, long hair, dress suit and all. He bowed low and seated himself at the piano, first twirling the stool until it was just the right height and rubbing his hands to make them limber. While he played he swayed forward and back and sideways in time to the music. Up and down went his feet as he pedalled, up and down went the five fingers of each hand, and up and down went the piano keys in perfect time to the music. He seemed always to strike the right notes; I am sure that a musician could not have seen a false chord, unless he heard one too, with such perfect attention to detail had the puppet's manager trained his pianist.

As they have so much musical talent it is not at all unlikely that American puppets will soon be appearing in operatic rôles. The simple gestures of the puppets are appropriate for acting in Grand Opera, where the action is not important in itself, but is merely a background for the music. Wherever stiff conventional acting is desirable the wooden Thespians are always at their best.

After hearing that wooden actors perform Grand Opera no one will be surprised to learn that they are Shakespearean players of long experience. But the puppets are like



human actors, the better the play they appear in, the better they do. The puppets began their career as Shakespearcan actors almost as soon as the players of the Globe. English marionettes appeared in *Hamlet* and *Julius Cæsar* in the time of Queen Elizabeth. A puppet edition of *Macbeth* appeared in the eighteenth century. It bore on the title page the name of Henry Rowe, a puppet showman of York. To prove the authenticity of this version, the preface stated: "The alterations that I have made in this play are warranted, from a careful perusal of a very old manuscript in the possession of my prompter, one of whose ancestors, by the mother's side, was a rush-spreader and candle-snuffer at the Globe playhouse, as appears from the following memorandum on a blank page of the manuscript: 'This day, March the fourth, received the sum of seven shillings and fourpence, for six bundles of rushes, and two pair of candle-snuffers.'" The book was really edited by Doctor Andrew Hunter of York, but it was such a good imitation of several scholarly editions of Shakespeare, that many serious-minded people thought Henry Rowe was a very learned Shakespearcan critic, and they never saw the hoax in the puppets' edition of *Macbeth*.

The German clown, Casperl, is said to have been a zealous student of Shakespeare. He could quote from the plays by the hour; but of course he distorted the poet's lines whenever he quoted and, whatever rôle he assumed, he interpreted, or rather misinterpreted, to suit his own pleasure.

In Paris Henry Signoret gave *The Tempest* with such success that Anatole France wrote several dramatic criticisms of the puppets' work, always in their praise.

"The hand that carved them imprinted in them the features of the ideal, whether it be tragic or comic," he said. "Miranda has the subtle grace of a figure of the early Italian Renaissance. Ariel in a gauze tunic spangled with silver is like a miniature Tanagra figure." In this production the younger Coquelin recited the prologue and spoke the part of Trinculo.

Mr. Brunelleschi has dressed his puppets as the members of the rival Houses of Capulet and Montague for their appearance in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Mrs. Maurice Brown's puppets at the Chicago Little Theatre celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth with a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which ran for five weeks. Marionettes have no difficulty in acting the part of fairies, for they can fly as easily as they can walk. Oberon and Titania can beat their wings in anger as they quarrel, and their train of fluttering attendants can really hover over them, swinging safely on their strings. Puck can actually be a flitting sprite and, as for Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed, they can be built especially for their parts, in which no human actors could ever be perfectly satisfactory, however skilful their make-up. As fairies, or angels, or magicians, puppets excel, and in every play where there is an atmosphere of mystery, they are better than human actors, who, being alive, cannot seem unreal, as the puppets can. This is probably the reason why marionettes are best for sacred plays; to many people it seems a desecration to employ human actors in the parts of saints and divinities, but the puppets are so obviously

not human that they may even jest in their religious plays and yet not seem sacrilegious.

At the Cleveland Play House Raymond O'Neil's doll actors have appeared in several plays of mystery. They presented William Butler Yeats' *Shadowy Waters* and Maeterlinck's *Death of Tintigales*, one of his *Plays for Marionettes*. It is doubtful whether the Belgian poet meant by this title that the plays were written for puppets to act. It is more likely that the author intended to suggest that the characters in the plays were, like marionettes, in the grasp of some stronger power, with no chance of struggling against their fate. Another Maeterlinck play of magic, *The Bluebird*, was arranged for the puppet stage by Mr. Brunelleschi.

Sometimes in fairy plays real people act with the puppets and appear as giants and ogres. This combination is very effective if the human actors are wise enough to pretend they are marionettes. But when they forget to move as if they were made of wood and wire, the naturalness of their action makes their puppet companions seem very stiff and incompetent. Of course the puppets can act gigantic parts; but they must be creatures of a larger wooden race.

Among the successful fairy tale plays that have been given at the Chicago Little Theatre are *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Wistful Tale of the Little Mermaid*, which is dramatized from Hans Christian Andersen's story, and *The Deluded Dragon*, a play written by Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Brown, for which the green monster of the old puppet plays was brought back to life. This dragon proved to be just as attractive and just as

terrifying as his ancestor was in the days of St. George and Dr. Faust.

Tony Sarg has revived *The Three Wishes*, an old fairy story which Count Franz Pocci made into a play for Papa Schmidt's Theatre in Munich. Count von Pocci was an artist, a poet, and a musician of a hundred years ago. Between his duties as Court Musician and Master of Ceremonies, he found time to illustrate a great many books for children. This versatile artist was a worthy assistant for the marionette director, "Dr. Pater Expeditus Schmidt," who was so loved by the Bavarian children that he was called Papa Schmidt or Casperl Schmidt. Under the guidance of "the Casperl muse," Pocci wrote fifty or more dramas for "the little temple of art" in the Blumenstrasse. When the first play was sent to the censor, the officials enjoyed Casperl's merry jests so much that they would not return the manuscript in time for the puppets to rehearse their lines, and the opening of the marionette theatre was delayed.

One of Pocci's most pleasing plays is *Forest Life*, a masque for Mother's birthday. The chief character is an old gnome, the guardian of the wood where the scene is laid. His wrath is aroused because a little girl has broken the branches from his trees. But when he hears that she wants the leaves to make a garland for her mother's birthday, his anger melts, and the play closes with the magic appearance of a gorgeous wreath with the mother's initial in the center. Franz Pocci's plays are for good children and good for children too.

Under this entertaining playwright's uplifting influence, even Casperl's behaviour improved. But not overmuch,

for in the play, Casperl and *The Magic Flute*, when the little clown bade farewell to his friends and went to say good-bye to the police, who he said would miss him most, he was informed by the officers that they had a record of six hundred and thirty-two crimes committed by Casperl, "and every one of them beneath the notice of the police." But when Casperl himself appeared in the stellar rôle of Casperl as *The Night Watchman*, he was so conscientious and attentive to his duty and so insistent upon all the laws and rules being obeyed that he would not even allow the moon to shine on the stage, because the almanac did not specify its appearance on that date.

The hundredth anniversary of Pocci's birth was celebrated in 1907 with a puppet revival in Munich, and Casperl spoke the prologue, "For the Opening," written by the poet's grandson.

The old plays that were made for the puppets have more than a historic interest. They are nearly always successful because they were written especially for the stiff little actors by people who knew their limitations, and they do not tempt the manager to urge his players into efforts that are doomed to failure, being beyond the ability of the puppet race.

Remo Bufano's puppets have acted the story of *The Three Wise Men of Gotham* by Tom Fool, the name Gordon Craig assumes when he writes for the puppet stage. Mr. Bufano's actors have also presented Molière's *A Doctor in Spite of Himself*. Molière's plays should be well suited to the marionettes because he wrote in the days when wooden actors were taken seriously and those experienced puppet actors, the Italian Comedy Masks, appear in his

plays, under French names. Mr. Bufano's puppets look exactly like Punch and Judy. They have large heads like Tony Sarg's actors in *The Rose and the Ring* which Mr. Thackeray designed himself, although of course he never suspected that his drawings would some day come to life and tell their own story on a puppet stage.

Whether the puppets will have a large enough patronage to make it profitable for them to stay with us is a question which time alone can answer. Gate receipts cannot be large at a single performance, for the dolls are not successful in a big theatre, where the auditorium seems to be out of proportion to the little actors. But this fact need not prevent commercial success for the puppets, as the cost of production and travelling for a marionette show is very little compared with the expenses of a life-sized play on tour.

The shadow puppet actors are meeting with success in the moving-picture theatres. Mr. Sarg's cardboard movie actors are posed between the light and the camera and so they appear only as silhouettes. Howard Moss has a company of doll actors for the screen. Taking the dolls' moving-pictures is a tedious task, as they must be posed and photographed and then posed again in the next position of the action while the camera waits for them. Several positions must be taken even for so simple an action as bowing, or else the dolls will seem to move in jerks like the figures in animated cartoons. A few ingenious motion picture producers are using stringed marionettes for actors.

When the puppets become recognized as moving picture stars, they will probably have larger audiences for their



own theatre. The doll actors make friends in every place they appear. New puppet theatres have sprung up wherever Mr. Sarg's marionettes have been exhibited. The puppets are the best advertisements for the art of puppetry, for the wooden players are irresistible. Who can help being charmed with their quaintness, their absurdity, their exaggerated gestures, their refreshing simplicity and their tiny stature? When we see them, those of us who have not forgotten our childhood are reminded of toys loved long ago.

Children love the puppets best of all, children from six to sixty, as Mr. Searle says, but it seems strange that he should exclude young people over sixty from the ranks of the puppets' friends, when we remember Goethe's dear old grandmother, and Goldoni's lavish grandsire, and George Sand dressing up her doll actors to amuse her grandchildren.

If the puppets do become American citizens, it is interesting to conjecture what influence they will have on the larger stage. All through the story of the drama we have found these little Thespians copying the ways of living actors, and the real actors, in turn, adopting the new ideas that the puppets had added to their plays. It is not unlikely that mechanical improvements in the large theatre may result from experiments on the little stages, which are so much easier to construct. If these improvements are in the direction of simplicity all will be well for the puppets. But if ingenious American managers make up their minds to increase the realism of the little actors' movements with machinery or electricity, or if they encourage the puppets too



much in showing off feats of realism, like deep breathing with a balloon inflated beneath their jackets—just to get a laugh from the audience—the puppet stage in America will meet the same fate it suffered in France when machinery destroyed the simple art that made the puppet plays beautiful. If the marionette plays are accepted by American audiences, many actors who have the genius and the voice, but not the physique and countenance to look the parts they aspire to play, may find their opportunity to speak heroic rôles by letting the little actors appear for them, while they remain out of sight and pull the strings. The puppets can be built and painted to suit any parts, and as for the less fortunate actors, they can be promoted to a managership, a position easier to fill in the puppet field than on the real stage, for it does not require executive ability to manage puppets. This is only one of the advantages that might come to us if the marionettes decide to make their home in America.

But if we wish the puppets to stay with us, we must treat them well. Every one cannot be a puppet player, but any one can attend a puppet show, when he is invited, and is sure to pay his money at the door. In spite of what Hamlet said, the audience is the thing, and a thin house is the greatest insult that can be given to an actor. If we are inhospitable to these little immigrants, the newly arrived marionettes will become discouraged and retire from public life. If you who have made the puppets' acquaintance through this book will only become their friends, and will advertise the virtues of the little players abroad, and urge all your acquaintances to go and see them, the wooden

actors will not be driven by hunger into the garret. But every one must do his part to provide the puppets with work to keep them alive. It depends upon you and me, dear reader. What are we going to do about it?

Unless we make this business profitable, there will be no American marionette drama. The Punch family will



have become extinct and the ancient race of marionettes will have perished from the earth. Harlequin and his fellows will have made their final exit. Punch will have bowed his last bow and Casperl taken his last curtain call, and this will be the end of the puppets' history.

## XIX

### Patrons and Patronesses



## Patrons and Patronesses

THE puppets have many biographers, and every one who has ever written about them has written with enthusiasm. The names of some of their friends and the titles of the works, except those that have been mentioned earlier, are added here so that if any of you who have read this book have become interested in the puppets you will know where to read more about them; and if any of you are still sceptical you may be impressed by names of authority. In some of these volumes and magazine articles you can find plays for the wooden actors, and in some of them there is little or nothing about the race of puppets. They are books that tell about the great personages whose lives the marionettes showed on the miniature stage, or about the people in their audiences, or the conditions of the theatre, which affected all actors. We are indebted to many of them for news of the puppets' adventures.

I take pleasure in introducing you to

Ludovico Ariosto . . . .	<i>Orlando Furioso</i>
H. Barton Baker . . . .	<i>History of the London Stage and Its Famous Players</i>
J. Dyer Ball . . . .	<i>Things Chinese</i>
Katherine Lee Bates . . .	<i>English Religious Drama</i>
Sir Walter Besant . . . .	<i>London in the Eighteenth Cen- tury</i>
Matteo Maria Boiardo . . .	<i>Orlando Innamorato</i>
R. J. Broadbent . . . .	<i>A History of Pantomime</i>

Cecil Henry Bullivant . . . . .	<i>Home Fun</i>
Edmund Kerchever Chambers . . . . .	<i>The Mediæval Stage</i>
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Fowell and Palmer . . . . .	<i>Censorship in England</i>
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Julian Hawthorne . . . . .	<i>The Literature of All Nations</i>
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Dr. Georg Jacob . . . . .	<i>Geschichte des Schattentheaters</i>
Richard Johnson . . . . .	<i>The Seven Champions of Christendom</i>
Helen Haiman Joseph . . . . .	<i>A Book of Marionettes</i>
Georgiana Goddard King . . . . .	<i>Comedies and Legends for Marionettes</i>
Charles Knight . . . . .	<i>Old London</i>
Terrien de Laconperie . . . . .	<i>Early Chinese Civilization</i>
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Vernon Lee . . . . .	<i>The Prince of the Hundred Soups</i>
Vernon Lee . . . . .	<i>Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy</i>
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Brander Matthews . . . . .	<i>A Book About the Theatre</i>
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Asataro Miyamori . . . . .	<i>Tales from Old Japanese Dramas</i>
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Ernest C. Peixotto . . . . .	<i>By Italian Seas</i>
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